

















*Thos Collins*

THE LIFE  
OF THE  
REV. THOS. COLLINS.

BY THE  
*REV. SAMUEL COLEY.*

WITH A PORTRAIT.

*THIRD EDITION.*

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## *PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.*

WHY another Biography? Because it pleased God to enrich this man's life with special endowments of grace of which the Church ought to be told. But, why such an unpractised pen set upon the work? Because within his circle no other seemed able to undertake it.

Here it is, composed amid many hurries and many duties; defective enough, doubtless, yet wealthy in such things as will thrill holy souls, instruct young Ministers, and stimulate all true hearts.

If it bless those who read, half as much as it has blessed him who has written, a great end will be answered, and no apology be needed.

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## *PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION*

WITH the issue of this new edition the Author feels bound to express his thanks for the uniform kindness of reviewers; his joy in the interest shown by the variously-named Methodist public; his pleasure in the testimony of many former colleagues and intimate friends of Mr. Collins that, in these pages, they have found a true portrait of the man; and above all his gratitude to Almighty God for the plentiful assurances he has received that, by Divine blessing, the book has been made useful alike to ministers and people, and both as an instrument of conversion and of quickening. These results have been his abundant reward. That the book may continue to serve such ends is his only wish.

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# LIFE

OF THE

## RÈV. THOMAS COLLINS.



### CHAPTER I.

#### CHILDHOOD.

THOMAS COLLINS was born April 12th, 1810, near Solihull, in Warwickshire. His parents, happily for him, though poor, were pious. Augustine has a strong saying, that "he tasted of the salt of God in his mother's womb:" a forcible utterance of the fact that he was, by Monica pledged unto the Lord ere he saw the light, dedicated before he was born. This precious pre-consecration of life by maternal purpose and prayer was not wanting in the case of Thomas Collins. The earliest scene in the life, the story of which we wish to tell, was singular. When the child was first brought to him, his father took him, placed a Bible on his breast, and folded the left arm round it; then, after putting a pen in the tiny right hand, knelt down, and prayed that God would accept the lad; would make him a faithful witness of that saving word; would help him, with tongue and pen, to bless his fellows. This is not the only instance in which love, labouring to express itself in symbol, has become eccentric. The device was odd, as was the chief actor in it, yet not reprehensible. Grave historians tell—and ecclesiastical purists do not censure—that infant Bernard, with equal form, and at as early an opportunity, was offered to Jesus, and thenceforth regarded as one separated unto, and to be disciplined for, the most arduous



service of the Great Master. Very likely the parents both of the Methodist and of the mediæval saint found real stimulus to faithful training in the memory of their voluntary pledge. Novelty of mode should not cause us to despise what, in each case, was the outgush of feelings which God generates, delights in, and honours.

The cottage in which Thomas Collins was born was humble. Visiting it in later life, he writes: "What a poor hovel it is!" Yet it had a charm for him which any palace would have lacked. He says, in lines only written for his children's eye, but which, for their free, sweet picture of rural child-life, and for their autobiographic value, I insert:—

From year to year I love to come  
And see this spot, my natal home,  
Near fifty years have pass'd away  
Since here I first beheld the day;  
Yet time and distance fail to wean  
My heart from this attractive scene.  
Can I forget my mother's eye?  
Her voice of perfect melody?  
The joy, the calm, the sense of rest  
I found, reposing on her breast?  
Here Nature show'd me first her face,  
Her forms of life and wondrous ways.  
Spring threw her scents and beauties round,  
And Summer gambol'd on the ground;  
Rich Autumn bro't her precious yield;  
Stern Winter took from her the field;  
Yet neither had a hasty reign,  
For long the seasons linger'd then.  
When I walk'd across the floor,  
Like a vessel leaving shore,  
I remember how I sway'd,  
Half rejoicing, half afraid;  
How I reap'd a rich reward  
In the garden and the yard;  
Penetrated further still,  
Gather'd strawberries on the hill;  
Gazed into the shining stream,  
Saw young fishes swiftly swim,  
Wriggling tadpoles, head and tail,  
Beetles clad in coat of mail.  
What new sensations rose in me  
When first I climb'd the apple-tree!  
Alarm,—because I was so high;  
Chagrin,—because no fruit was nigh;  
For it was then, as it is now,

That on the high and utmost bough,  
 That feels the softest wind that blows,  
 The fruit delicious chiefly grows.  
 When I was good, then, for a treat,  
 An outer coat of honey sweet  
 Upon my butter and my bread  
 My mother, kind, would sometimes spread.  
 One day, in too much haste to thrive,  
 I made an onslaught on the hive :  
 Inform'd that honey came from there,  
 And eager for a larger share,  
 I seized an opportunity  
 To storm the castle of the bee.  
 A stick of length I coolly took,  
 And in the hive began to poke.  
 Infuriate then, the little things  
 Avenged the insults with their stings.  
 Thus early, I was made to see  
 Impatience and dishonesty,  
 And all ill ways of getting gain,  
 Have pain and danger in their train.  
 I love to think on my child-days ;  
 That providential care to trace  
 Which all of good to all supplies,  
 And never fails and never dies.  
 In water once, yet still not drown'd ;  
 Lost more than once, as often found ;  
 On fire, the Guardian Hand was nigh,  
 And God preserved my infancy.  
 He is my Home,—my endless Home.  
 Let change or dissolution come ;  
 Let this loved spot, which saw my birth,  
 Be burnt, and pass, with heaven and earth ;  
 Yet God remains, a Home for me,  
 My Portion through eternity.

Both parents being devout members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, that lowly home was ordered by them in the fear of the Lord. The family government was characterized by much piety and some oddity. The paternal method of insuring iron hardness to the boy, left to his latest days queer reminiscences of being plucked from the pillow in winter mornings, and made uncomfortably wide awake by being plunged through thin ice, over head and ears, in the waters of a neighbouring stream. The impunity with which this Spartan regimen was borne may be accepted as fair proof that, in its subject, native constitutional vigour was not wanting.

The course adopted for the correction of faults was quite as unusual. For some juvenile delinquency, the father, disliking severities of the scourge, found a substitute for them by tying the hands of the lad to the beam in the barn, and leaving him there to contemplate, through all the dinner hour, some much-coveted apple dumplings placed, for that purpose, well in sight of his eyes, but out of all reach of his teeth.

Years of instructive experience, not possible to be thrown away upon one so keen in observation, brought, I think, some doubts of the value of these well meant, but rude and strange, expedients. A letter, written to his son in 1832, remarks, "Anger against thee never lodged in my breast. My chastisements, sometimes darkly done, were ever with an eye to thy salvation." Despite all peculiarities, the discipline practised in that cottage was, on the whole, religious, kind, and wise; and has been so blessed of heaven that it has issued in making good men and women of the somewhat numerous family subjected to it.

The father, John Collins, was a man of strong individuality, utterly unconventional, very original, of great faith, earnest zeal, indomitable courage, and almost infinite love of adventure; of whom, if now fast fading memories could be gathered and fixed, a life might be written matching those of the early Methodist worthies of England in spirituality, and yet vying with the racy stories of American pioneers in interest. The mother was a tender, nerve-shaken, loving woman. She suffered much in body, and was often much depressed in mind; yet her conversation was not without a dash of quaint humour. She had great interest in the progress of the work of God; and it was beautiful to see how the clouds, results of physical causes, which frequently dimmed the joy of her experience, ever broke and scattered in presence of any special triumphs of grace.

The family early removed to the neighbourhood of Redditch. His first teacher, still living, thus writes:—"His father committed him to my care at about the age of six. He was then a fine-grown, chubby little fellow, intelligent beyond his years, very imaginative, and specially full of pilgrim notions borrowed from

Bunyan." To his young mind good Christian's Progress was no allegory, but a very literal history. He himself, long after, narrating a visit to the "Eachway," the place of his home at that time, says, "I crossed the hill over which I had so often gone to school. The slope that descends from its brow was in those days firmly believed by me to be the entrance of the Valley of Humiliation. On reaching that point it was my custom to draw and open a large clasp-knife, allowed me for dinner purposes, and which had been carefully rubbed to an edge on a brick. Brandishing this formidable weapon, I ran through the hollow way, singing, in defiance of Apollyon, whom I verily expected some day to meet there, Bunyan's verse :

" But blessed Michael helped me, and I  
By dint of sword did quickly make him fly."

His tutor further describes him as much impressed with solemn conceptions of the spirit world,—a thing very natural for one possessed of such a quick and realizing fancy,—of unusual thoughtfulness, and little avidity for play; full of strange queries; and, altogether, a singular, noticeable child.

He remarks, that "his thoughts were uncommon, and his questions often such as I had neither expected nor could answer." In a class conversation, of which the subject was the healing of Malchus, the boy at once affirmed his belief to be, that the Saviour's touch restored not the *ear*, but the *hearing*, of the smitten man: an economy of miracle power which many a German professor of venerable years would esteem to be a bright thought, and which, in the lips of a seven-year-old critic, certainly showed a mind precociously active. Holy Scripture was not only thought of, but, in his simple manner, unfalteringly accepted as a rule of conduct. His master observing that, dinner over, unlike the rest of the boys, he gave the rest of the hour to reading and quiet, asked him, "Why not join the games?" The reply was a citation of 1 Cor. x. 7: "Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose

up to play." We smile at the child's exposition, but we delight in the child's conscience. Play after meat, with that text in view, wore to him a suspicious look.

An unfledged bird fails to soar, for want of strength and feathers; but its upward leap reveals its native instinct for flight, and is the promise that hereafter it will fly. This incipient criticism, exposition, obedience, and Apollyon defiance, marked, in child-forms, the existence of heavenly gifts, which, when matured and cultured, adorned the man.

"Ye have killed *My* children," said God to Moloch-worshipping Israelites. "All souls are Mine," saith He; His by creating fiat and by redeeming blood; His, then, every babe that breathes.

Knowing this, of all brought to us, (of course, supposing no flagrant unfitness of the bringers to take part in any holy service,) we reject not any from baptismal recognition. We put on every one—why should we not?—the seal-mark of the Great Proprietor.

Baptism does *not cause* its recipient's relation to our nature's second Federal Head, but attests it; does *not confer* prevenient grace, but symbolizes and seals it.

With this agree the terms of Christ's children's charter, "Suffer little children"—little children, as such; little children, universally—"to come unto Me:" not that they may be made this, that, or the other, as common, ancient, mischievous error, thousand-tongued, proclaims it: but, because as the Master saith, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." In placing each child's name in the book of the church, we do but wisely conform the earthly register to the heavenly. Christ hath redeemed all,—claims all,—in the inventory of His subjects includes all. The ecclesiastical acknowledgment is the sequence of the mediatorial. Let holy rites *declare them His*: for reason good,—*they are His*.

While we prize the ritual of the font, yet in our thoughts we no way confine grace to that ritual. Children of devout Baptists and pious Quakers, because lacking water, do not therefore lack relation to Christ, or fail of their share in that "free gift" that hath come "upon all men." An Apostle writes it, "The Head of

every man is Christ :” Him a Gospel proclaims as “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” Beams of mercy from Him cleave the thick darkness in every soul. His grace kindleth conscience —“the candle of the Lord”—in baptized and unbaptized alike.

The acknowledgment of the universality of blessing for childhood, in virtue of the creation and the cross, is no denial of the fact, that *children of true believers have supplemental blessings also*. Faith in benefits common to humanity, in nothing contradicts expectation of the special benefits accruing from godly paternity.

As a parent, Mr. John Collins felt comfort in “the Gospel preached unto Abraham ;” which “the Law four hundred and thirty years after could not disannul ;” which Gospel still remains in force. The gracious pledge, dear to every godly father’s heart, is, “I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee.” This gem for the family St. Peter set afresh, when, in the plenary inspiration of Pentecost, he said, “The promise is unto you and to your children.”

He held, not without Bible warranty, that until children are of age by self-action to take, and by self-will really have taken, separate standing, the Christian parent is graciously permitted to claim for them the advantages of his own. The Scripture aphorism is, “If the root be holy, so are the branches.” The case is adjudged. Paul has ruled it, 1 Cor. vii. 14 : “Your children are holy.”

At their birth he accepted his children as the Lord’s. At their baptism he took them from the minister’s arms as the Church’s. Of a trust so precious, so solemnly committed, and so sealed, he held himself bound in aftertime to render account. His plan of carrying out that idea was this : So soon as his children reached the age of seven years, he entered their names into his class-book, led them by the hand to the meeting as auditors, and claimed for them recognition as members. If any asked, “Why should they be in ?” his reply was, “Nay, it is your business to show why they should be out !” When one who has been an alien, a profligate, or a worldling, presents himself for admission to Church-membership, he, of course, must be met with questions:

he has his right to prove. But children of Christian parents, having no stain of overt offence, are in a different case. They have a birthright—a birthright that has been publicly acknowledged; theirs it remains until they forfeit it by immorality, let it lapse by neglect, or repudiate it by perverseness. On the Church that refuses their recognition must lie the *onus* of showing cause.

Methodism, by its, on the whole, wise division of money burdens, according to reported numbers in membership, puts, practically, a serious check upon the wide following of this kind of parental action. Mr. John Collins once affirmed in public, "From the beginning of their seventh year, I paid a penny a week for each of my children;" and then, reaching out his hand, he added, emphatically, "And I did that when all I had for a large family was earned by these fingers as a hardworking mason." Of course, not every poor man will have either energy or self-denial enough to do the like: we know it is not done. Statistics furnish sad proofs that there is some missing link between baptized youth and accredited membership. Many, deeply concerned, are saying, Something must be done. But what? If, after consideration, John Collins' plan be thought healthy, the financial difficulty may be easily met, either by giving a special catechumen ticket, or by enacting that young people, so introduced, though *counted in the numeration of the flock*, should, until they had attained any age which a wise weighing of the question might determine, be *excluded from all calculations intended to be the basis of money arrangement*. One additional line in the Circuit Schedule, giving the number of members under, say, fourteen, would furnish all the data requisite for such an adjustment.

Cotton Mather, in his "Magnalia," wisely remarks: "The Lord hath not set up Churches that old Christians may keep one another warm while they live, and then carry away the Church with them when they die: no; but that they might, with all care, nurse still successively another generation of subjects to our Lord, that may stand up in His kingdom when they are gone."

Methodism has done much and well by *conquest*;

but only little and inadequately by *nurture*. May her power and perfection in *this* matter daily increase! Thousands ought to be, might be, must be, thus gathered into our fold.

Thomas, according to the forementioned family rule, was thus early connected with the Church; and not long after with very marked circumstances, entered into conscious enjoyment of "the peace of God." In the year 1818, Gideon Ouseley, the famous Irish Missionary, preached at Redditch. His word was clothed with much Divine power. The heavenly flame melted many. Thomas, just entering on his ninth year, was there. Under that mighty ministry, his heart, prepared by "grace prevenient," broke utterly. The public service closed, but he would not leave. Touched by such inconsolable sorrow, Ouseley himself led him into the house of the Rev. John W. Cloake, with whom, and with the father, the holy man continued in prayer until the tears of the weeping child were wiped away, and he indubitably received the Spirit of adoption.

Glad memory of that hour never failed. Warm gratitude to the instrument of good never grew cold. A portrait of the venerable evangelist formed always one of the few adornments of his private room. Life through, that parlour was esteemed sacred. To it one of his last visits in Redditch was paid, in order that once again he might offer praise upon the very spot where the joy unspeakable thrilled him first.

The scene that had taken place in that chamber was too touching for any witness of it easily to forget. When Mr. Collins, in 1846, was entering the Conference at Bristol, he caught sight of the pastor under whose roof the facts had occurred. Changed from a boy to a man, he might have passed unrecognised. Seating himself, however, by Mr. Cloake's side, he just mentioned to him his name. The effect was electric. Starting up at the word, the aged Minister clasped the speaker round the neck, and, as if resuscitated memory were more vivid than present vision, as if he saw him a child still, cried, "O Tommy, Tommy! is it you?" That gush of unrestrained affection was evidence of a simplicity and ripening fulness of love beautifully prelude of heaven,



and furnished sweet thoughts when, with many brethren more, Mr. Collins, but a few days after, stood by the good man's open grave : for ere the session then begun had closed, most unexpectedly he was called home to God.

At the Missionary Meeting next ensuing after Ouseley's visit a circumstance occurred, at once heartmelting and uncommon. The father, being called upon to speak, closed a most earnest address by saying, " Heathens often dedicate their children unto idols ; shall I, who serve the Living God and True, do less : " Then at the word, leading to the front his little boy, he there authoritatively, as his father, offered him to the Lord, and publicly pledged himself never to withhold him from any work the Lord might call him unto. He then further solemnly took promise of his son before the people, that he, through all his after life, would be to Christ a faithful servant and soldier. At that affecting scene many wept ; and the Chairman of the meeting, Rev. Jonathan Edmondson, that year President of the Conference, being greatly moved, laid his hands on the boy's head, and blessed him. The troth that day plighted was never forgotten.

Thomas continued to be the subject of spiritual life, power, and joy, for some considerable time, during which his piety was recognised by all. He successfully recommended his Saviour to others ; and, though of such few years, was ripe enough in knowledge profitably, and not unfrequently, to take part in the conduct of family worship.

A Sunday scholar having, by some accident, been suddenly killed, a sermon, suited to impress the monitory lessons of that providence, was preached to the young in the school. The appeals heard from the desk were well followed up by Thomas Collins upon the road. As he went with his sister towards their home, he pressed them upon her with such effect that emotion stopped their walk, and the two children knelt down together in the lane to pray.

His love of the Bible was great. The Superintendent once gave out to the whole school a subject, proffering a prize to the boy who should on the next Sabbath produce the most suitable and numerous passages of Scrip-

ture bearing upon it. Though among the youngest, he easily reached the first place in a competition so congenial. The examination being concluded, "Here," said the superintendent, lifting up a large plum cake, "this, then, belongs to Thomas Collins." After a moment's pause, the lad unselfishly replied, "Sir, I am thankful to know my Bible, but, if you please, would rather share my cake." So, at his request, it was cut up for all.

Sunshine was now on the family prospects. The father, elevated from a handworker into an employer, naturally desired his firstborn son to have some opportunities of refinement and letters higher than his own. He was therefore sent away to a boarding school at Alvechurch. The advantage, if any, was dearly purchased at the price of spiritual loss. During that twelvemonth of perilous absence from home influence declension came. The zest of the closet diminished. Mirth and trifling mastered him. An ill-chosen school—specially for that crisis time in which the boy develops into the young man—is a domestic curse. On the return of Thomas Collins to his parents they were grieved to see the class-meeting neglected and all joy of salvation gone. His conduct, however, continued to be strictly moral. "I never knew Thomas tell a lie," was his mother's witness of him. He could not rid himself of either the fear of the Lord or the curb of restraining grace.

Of this period of his life I find notice of a little adventure in a letter from my sister. She playfully remarks, "Do not make your hero too good, or I will bring up the first fact about him which I can remember." To prevent such exposures I here insert her narrative. "One Christmas morning, when I was but a little girl, the bells were ringing, and, to my fancy, the snowflakes dancing to their merry tune; as, mounted on a chair, I watched them through the window, I saw a well-grown youth walk up to our door and knock. With childish eagerness I ran to open it. An unknown, but very resolute, face met my eyes. Mother, laying hold of the new arrival, said, 'Why Thomas, why did they let thee come without sending word, that we might meet thee?' He seemed

thoughtful, but-passed the question with a quiet smile. I and my brother Joseph got on famously with him; he asked us so many puzzles, said so many pleasant things, and taught us so many new games, that we settled it that our new-found cousin was a very fine fellow indeed. It soon came out, however, that he had, in fact, run away from home: and what, think you for? Because his father insisted upon his beginning to teach in the Sunday school, and he insisted that he did not know enough to be a teacher. On discovering how matters lay, my mother, of course, sent message of his whereabouts, and took steps to make his peace. After a fortnight's stay with us, which we very much enjoyed, he returned to his home."

From that time he rebelled no more against parental authority. He attended all the public means of grace, taught in the school, sang in the choir, interested himself in the progress of the cause, and laboured for mental improvement.

In the spring of the year 1826, the Lord vouchsafed to the town of Redditch, under the labours of the Rev. W Davies, now of Brecon, a time of remarkable refreshing. Mr. Davies writes, "Redditch being a solitary station, I entered upon the work there with a deep sense of responsibility. The cause seemed low, and by the consciousness of how much devolved upon me alone, I was driven to earnest prayer. My first address was upon the duty of entire dedication of body and soul to God and to His service. The impression upon the Society was deep and permanent. The class-meetings were better attended; the week-day services improved, the prayer meetings became lively, and the Society received additions daily.

"As a pastor I was greatly encouraged by the case of Miss Perry, one who had served the Lord from her youth; but having for many years been a great invalid, in her dearth of means and strength, she had sunk into a state of doubt and anxious fear. During one of my visits, she in a most clear and marked manner recovered her joy of salvation. With holy ardour she immediately pressed into the fulness of love. Her experience of it was deep, and her testimony concerning it most satisfactory and edifying. At my request she invited the young female members of Society to see her, and to them with great

tenderness, intelligence, and effect, she set forth the bliss and privilege of entire sanctification of soul.

"This leaven wrought. One night Mrs. Reading, the leader of a class which usually met at a private house, found such a number gathered with her members, in distress of mind, that she judged it best to adjourn to the vestry, and also to request the presence and help of several experienced and devoted persons. The meeting was protracted. On my return from a country appointment, hearing the sound of prayer, I went in, and was gladdened by seeing many graciously set at liberty.

"The good work spread. Hundreds felt its influence. Some of the worst characters of the neighbourhood were converted."

Many have been gathered into heaven ; but a few ripe sheaves of that harvest remain on the field even to this very hour. One correspondent describes Thomas Collins as being at that time "witty, genial, and pleasant;" another says, "I never heard any ill of him. He was so amiable and affectionate that everybody loved him." All this was true, but yet he lacked "the pearl." Amid the prevailing religious earnestness, and under the faithful preaching of his minister, he received such quickened convictions of sin as led him to say, "Death's call would to me be a summons to hell." Though thus awakened, his spirit was unmastered. When the revival had continued about two months, he was so little under the power of its spell as to be both able and inclined to scoff at what seemed to him to be the needless vociferousness of some of its subjects. Nearing the chapel, one Friday evening, he heard the loud cries of a young man, who was imploring mercy in all the agonies of spiritual distress : sarcastically he inquired, "Who is roaring there?" The name given awoke strange emotions ; it was that of John Wright, a youth who with himself had shared the blessings of the former visitation under the apostolic Ouseley ; and who also, like himself, had let the good thing slip. Hastening on, he pushed his way through the crowded vestry, until he stood beside his stricken friend ; nor did he stand long, but falling at his feet, poured forth his soul in pleadings for salvation not less intense or loud. The prayers of

each prevailed, and were soon exchanged for bursts of praise and holy raptures of thanksgiving.

The blessed tidings soon reached his mother; she was at the time in the very deep of one of her too frequent fits of depression. Her soul, though safe, was all in storm, trouble, and alarm. The cause was physical. Her Father above remembered her frame, and registered no condemnation against her. Yet in the gloom she could neither see His smile nor realise His love. Fear had taken hold upon her. Words were of no avail. Reasonings cannot control disease. Poor creature! it had been midnight with her for months. But the good news came: her son was saved! Ah! that lifted her into sunshine in a moment. Every fibre of her maternal heart rejoiced. With all the gush of a mother's love she exulted in God; and, despite the devil and the nerves, lived in the impulse of that glad fact a joyous woman for years.

From this eventful day until his final hour Thomas Collins ever walked in the light of God's favour. Long after, in a recorded act of devotion, he says, "O Lord, I thank Thee for breaking and renewing my heart under Gideon Ouseley, and for weaning me from sin a second time under William Davies." Who that knows what thence ensued, the pure and useful life over which holiness threw such a glory and beauty, will not say to that doxology, "Amen?"

## CHAPTER II.

### PREPARATION.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH, commenting on the saying of Jesus to the Paralytic, well remarks that "the absolving words, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' are not to be regarded as a desire that so it might be, but as *declaratory* that so it was ; the man's sins were forgiven. Nor yet were they declaratory alone of something which passed in the mind and intention of God ; but, even *as the words were spoken*, there was shed abroad in the heart of the man *the sense* of forgiveness and reconciliation with God. For indeed God's justification of a sinner is not merely a word spoken *about* him, but a word spoken *to* him and *in* him ; not an act of God's *immanent* in Himself, but *transitive* upon the sinner. In it there is the love of God ; and so *the consciousness* of that love, shed abroad in his heart upon whose behalf the absolving decree has been uttered." This citation exactly saints the case of Thomas Collins. His soul set aglow in the hour of prayer was strengthened to believe ; and as in the act of faith he trusted all—all for ever—to the Atonement, the Saviour's own absolution, inwardly pronounced by "The Spirit that beareth witness," scattered his fears. Having in childhood "tasted the powers of the world to come," he knew the taste again, and said to a friend, "This is what I wanted ; this is the joy—lost for years—but I know it ; it is the very same that filled and thrilled me while Ouseley prayed." He immediately—as all who would get to heaven should—sought union with the people of God ; and, on the very next Wednesday night, in the class conducted by his pastor, was enabled to give testimony of his salvation at once clear and rapturous. From that hour he was, life through, a loving, active, exemplary Methodist.

The ancient knight was a cleaver of skulls, a fighting man rather than a leader: his great force lay in muscle, not brain. But who ever thought of estimating the value of Napoleon upon a battle field by the blows he gave? He wielded an army not a sword.

Ministers should "covet earnestly" the general's gift. The man who has the faculty of getting others to work, keeping them at their work, and wisely directing their work, will get more done than any solitary labourer can do, though he be strong as Samson and diligent as Paul.

The Rev. W. Davies toiled; but what was more and better, he attracted toilers round him; he stimulated such converts as God gave him both to improve their talents and to use them. Of the young men he organized several bands; and commissioned them to go forth week by week to visit, pray, exhort, and in every possible way evangelize in the surrounding villages. At the head of one of these pioneer companies Thomas Collins was placed. His first public attempt to call sinners to repentance was made in a large room at Stratford-on-Avon: to reach which place he walked fifteen miles, and then, after the service, weary, but happy, trudged the fifteen miles back again.

Ere long he was formally proposed to the Local Preachers as a candidate for place and work among them. The only objection was some very noticeable impediment in speech. About it he wrote, "I have laid this matter before God. I will try to master it, and He will help." Acquaintance of twenty-six years' standing leaves me completely ignorant of what kind the defect was: whatever it was, prayer and care cured it. His enunciation, as known to me, was always clear and impressive. There are few cases of defective articulation which painstaking perseverance cannot amend. This successful issue is recorded here for the purpose of encouraging promising young men, of stammering tongue, to set with good heart to the work of remedy.

About this time the following excellent advice reached Thomas Collins in a letter: "Whether in piety, usefulness, or learning, let perfection be your aim. Your motto must be, 'Try, try, try, again!' Failure must not lead

you to lower your standard, but to quicken your step." In the spirit of that counsel, with growing earnestness, he sought every possible improvement in matter, manner, and aim. All labours issuing in mental culture became thenceforth to him a pleasure.

As is common, these youthful exercises include many essays in verse. Receive an instance, the earliest I can find. Called for a time, by business, from Redditch, the abode he happened upon was such as to make him think sleep sweeter for its dreams of home than for its rest. He writes :—

What absence denies me while waking I mourn,  
That vision supplies me at evening's return.

The contrast which made memories dear appears also to have stirred his bile, and made his muse satirical :—

To know the full pleasure and sweetness of home,  
Renounce that best treasure, to Netherton come :  
For Washer, and Mender, and Mother, behold  
A female in gender, in anger a scold.  
Home, Home, there's no place like Home !  
How constant the comforts beginning at Home !

Whatever the disadvantages of his lodging may have been, a list, yet extant, of books read there furnishes proof that such opportunity as it afforded for study was not,—as is too often the case,—because small, neglected, but used to the full. Of his poetic faculty friends thought much more highly than he ever did himself. A reply to a request for a specimen begins :—

Dear Sir, I hardly know the time  
I last employed my pen in rhyme ;  
Nor would it much degrade my pen  
Were I no more to rhyme again.

When a gentleman—doubtless overestimating his powers—sought to incite him to an adventurous epic effort, his answer, in lightsome verse, first shows the difficulty of winning popular respect for any but "*Respectables* ;" next, describes himself as "born to moil amid the mortar ;" dilates with genuine wit upon the hard, unfan-  
ciful realities of his mason craft ; and then, thus epi-  
grammatically concludes :—



It will not do for men like these  
To think of writing poem ;  
Such author's work could never please,  
Unless they did not know him.

That this merry fling at his occupation may neither leave a wrong impression, nor encourage in any young mind unhealthy dissatisfaction with its lot, I hasten to say that of that feeling I find no trace in him. He never feared hard work ; never was ashamed to own his trade, or handle his tools : that good old morality had been taught him, that it was part of religion "to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me." In fact, the only difficulties friends had to overcome to induce him to enter the clerical rank, were the sturdy English independence that loved to win with his own hand the bread he ate, and the generosity that longed to give to the Church all *he* could do for her freely. Experience soon taught him that his scruples had been groundless ; that the Methodist phrase was right, "He had entered *our work* ;" that Christ's separated men are labourers, not loiterers ; that ministers, as well as masons, are sons of toil ; and he, like many others, proved the toil he entered upon to be more wearing, exhausting, and life-shortening than that which he left. He, undoubtedly, wrought harder as a builder for God than ever he had done as a builder for men. Men true to the Gospel call need not blush to take the maintenance their "Lord hath ordained" them. They earn it well. An idle minister ! shame befall him ! of none is the devil surer. An indolent not worth his salt, it were a contradiction to call him minister. He does not deserve that honourable title ; no, not though an Apostle's hand had touched his head, or an archbishop's name endorsed his licence.

One of his vigilant pastors, wisely fearing that Thomas Collins might be led by flatterers to waste mental strength in clinking rhymes when he ought to be pursuing knowledge and disciplining himself to furnish reasons, thus wrote to him :—"Poetry gives polish. I do not say renounce, but *limit* your labours of that kind. *Your work* will want vigour rather than gloss. You will have to preach in prose ; and, if much good is to come of it, in

very plain prose too." This advice he accepted ; and, without burying his talent, kept it in exercise just enough to give point to a child's appeal in behalf of its missionary box, or to enable him, when required, with ease, to set precious truth in graceful form upon a lady's album page. I find a few—better than common—Sunday School Festival Odes of his authorship ; several devout metrical meditations ; and many epistles to his children, describing adventures of his outgoings in verses of that jingling rhyme and cantering metre which, though not fit subject for lofty criticism, always gives to the circle it reaches more pleasure than Milton's masterpiece.

Without any pretension to be, in the highest sense, a poet, he was an ingenious marshaller of words, and a fair verse-maker ; and sometimes, in favoured moments, achieved on Zion's harp success not unworthy of her famous minstrels. One hymn commencing,—

Stars of Morning, shout for joy,  
Sing Redemption's mystery,  
Holy, Holy, Holy, cry, and praise the Lamb !

is a very spirit-stirring lyric. In certain circles it has had popularity ; and, having been adopted in several well-known collections of revival song, both in England and America, though, I believe, in all cases without appending the writer's name, it will probably endure.

A Tuesday morning meeting for mutual improvement was initiated. To Thomas Collins the preparation of an Inaugural Address upon the duties of young men was allotted. From faded jottings I recover its sum. Conscious of ignorance, inexperience, and personal deficiency he yet professes to take lovingly to his appointed subject. He can claim no authority, but has much affection. Though they cannot reverence him as a father, he can trust them to receive him as a brother ; the very youthfulness which makes them doubt him as an oracle may, he hopes, assure them of his sympathy.

He classifies their duties as Personal, Relative, and Religious. He argues the early years of life to be the season most suitable for mental improvement : the organs then are acute, the faculties quick, and the pursuit of knowledge full of zest.

He sets forth the wisdom of that Divine arrangement which, in the human subject, so protracts the period of physical youth as to avoid the evil of the body's growth outrunning the mind's maturity: both develop, both reach manhood together.

He recommends Reading, Meditation, and Communication, as the three great means of mental improvement.

He predicts that their weekly intercourse will issue in strengthening their memories, training their logical faculties, and bringing out much valuable knowledge, which else, continuing latent, would have been lost.

He finally advises all to prepare carefully, speak freely, and ever to seek each the others' good.

The next essay had for its subject, "Human Will." So ever recurring is that among the problems of young truth-seekers, that it would seem as if Wisdom kept it, like Penelope did Ulysses' bow, as a test for all her suitors. We will melt into a few sentences the substance of this really vigorous paper:—

Will is man's royalty; the shadow of creative power; a lingering line of God's primeval image. It is the arbiter of life's ends; the spring of action; the spirit-helm that gives to conduct its guiding turn.

None can ignore volition as a fact; its phenomena are visible to all. Fatalism may be printed in a book, but cannot be acted upon in life. All intercourse,—business,—government,—is invariably carried on *as if* responsibility were just and undeniable.

Will is vital to any right conception of obedience, or transgression; of penalty, or reward. Every application, either of distribution or demand, whether coming to man from Hell, or Earth, or Heaven, presupposes will within him, and appeals to it. If it be not there, the devil is a fool to tempt, and the preacher runs on a bootless errand.

Deprive a man of recollection, reason, charity, you make him a beast; but deny him will, and you sink him into a machine. The emotions of such a being would have no more moral character than the rotations of a millwheel.

Freedom is essential to the idea of will. Performance may be restrained, but purpose is free. You may as well talk of spiteful love, or dark light, as of necessitated will.

The Necessitarian, to explain prescience, falls back upon fate. They err who, to explain a mystery, invent a theory. Mystery is only another name for our ignorance. We are little. Truth infinitely overlaps us. Is it any wonder that its circumference should outreach our vision? God sees all. How? we are not asked to believe, and need not care to know. One thing, however, we maintain, His foresight of human fall must never be so held as to make Him accessory to human sin.

The doctrine of fate is false in philosophy, heathen in religion, and impracticable in affairs. It endeavours to atone for robbing man of one will by declaring God to have two; and two diametrically opposite: one, public and preceptive, which sinners violate; the other, secret but determining, which they every moment fulfil. This is surely a limping theology, full of contradictions, absurdities, and ill consequences.

A Lecture upon Human Depravity was subsequently prepared for delivery before the same audience.

Every candid observer finds humanity to be a bundle of contradictions. The doctrine of the Fall is the very Rosetta stone of man's condition: master it, and it gives the key, the explanation of everything. All who would not be superficial divines must drop their plummet in this deep. Realization of this truth, what profundity it gave to Wardlaw's ethics,—to Pascal's thoughts,—to Augustine's theology! It is not surprising that a doctrine so humiliating should be opposed: who would not start from the mirror that found there an image so ugly?

✧ The paper written upon this theme by Thomas Collins was, for the time, a very creditable performance; clear, orthodox, orderly, and well sustained by scriptural proof. His next attempt was not so successful. It had for its subject, "Providence." It must have been taskwork, labour allotted, not chosen. The treatment is thin, shallow and unsatisfactory. "Did you ever take such a text?" inquired a Minister of a sensible Local Preacher. "No, sir." "Why not? Do you not see your way into it?" "O yes, but I do not see my way *out of it!*" Much in that case seems Thomas Collins in this discourse. Lacking thought, he takes to adjective-piling, and uses much juvenile grandeur. He flounders and struggles,

but makes no progress; and fails all through to reach "the height of that great argument."

One only other document remains which had origin in the Young Men's Association. Its title is, "Hell; or the Future Punishment of the finally Impenitent." The introduction embodies the result of much careful reading. It furnishes full information of the poetic fictions of the mythologists, of the material horrors depicted in the Koran, and of the the wild dreams invented by the heathen. This is followed by a large and reverent statement of the Scripture teaching. The close is polemic; and in it the reasons which lie against the Purgatory of the Papist, and the Reformatory of the Universalist, are well urged. I will reproduce just one noteworthy remark:—" '*For ever:*' doubtless this phrase is sometimes used in a secondary signification; but, even when so used, it *always denotes the longest period of which its subject is capable*; e.g., 'a servant for ever' means, a servant while life shall last; , an ordinance for ever,' an ordinance until the dispensation it is a part of closes: 'tormented for ever,' by the law, then, even of this lower usage, must mean tormented as long as the soul hath any being."

These early productions fairly depict Thomas Collins in the labour of mental preparation; and excellently show how he trained himself to think by grappling with important questions. Few who, in these summaries, have watched the processes and progress of his thoughts will deny them to be manly, worthy, and full of promise.

Early in the year 1830, Henry Breeden, a disciple fresh from the school of John Smith, came to Redditch. If possible, he outflamed his master. His sermons were numerous, but his topics few. As in the broadside of a war-ship, everything was so directed as to strike one mark. Each shot was weighty, well-aimed, and *red-hot*. Nothing was thrown away. The whole force of the man was concentrated. Hear him when you would, the terrors of eternity, the freeness of salvation, the fulness of Christian privilege, and no other themes whatever, employed him. A letter of the period, written by a good judge, says, "Such a man for faith, strength, and tact, I never heard."

The issue of this earnest, pointed, vigorous preaching was the outbreak in the Circuit of a revival widespread and remarkable. The unhappy controversies concerning faith;—the unnecessary employment of women in pulpit exercises,—and the unwise protraction of religious meetings into midnight hours, which afterwards caused strife and division, however much they illustrate the craft of Satan, detract not in the smallest degree from the genuineness of a work which brought many to Christ and wedded others indissolubly to holiness. Calmly looking back, we thank God for the salvation which He wrought; we pity men for the mistakes they made; we rejoice over the fruit which to this day endures; and are happy to know that the chief instrument, with ripened piety and maturer wisdom, serves, in a vigorous age, his Great Master still, as an honoured, much beloved, much blessed Minister in another fold.

At a prayer-meeting held on the evening of March 5th, 1830, Thomas Collins, whose spirit for some time had been stirred with desire after holiness, was enabled to believe the cleansing word; and, in the strength of that faith, to bow his whole will utterly to Christ, to whom he surrendered all authority in his soul. The act of devotion was complete. Thenceforth life was a priesthood, and sacrifice a vocation. The altar upon which self was dedicated sanctified the gift, and upon the living sacrifice which faith laid there, heavenly fire came down. The covenant that hour made was never revoked: "Not your own," was printed indelibly upon his heart. His sister, during his last illness, remarked to him, with joy, upon his long testimony before the Church of the bliss and duty of perfect love. His reply was, "I got it; I kept it; I have it now, and it is heaven!"

His brother writes: "The Saturday night upon which he received that blessing I shared his bed. Sleep I could not; he was praying and praising all night."

Until this time—naturally with one to whom all literary work, whether of creation or correction, had become a joy—the productions of his pen had been too laboured. Simplicity, *that last of excellences*, was wanting. Gaudy adornings had cumbered the truth, and big words dinned the ear more than they touched the heart. A specimen

of very cunning artificiality lies on yellow, year-worn pages before me. It is a Missionary Report: it was drawn up for the young people. In it the elder Society is described at length as a ship, and the juvenile association as her attendant boat. Plank, and copper, and cordage, all mean something or other. She is ribbed with Resolution; Wisdom is her guiding rudder; her anchor Faith; her cable Hope; her stowage Charity: thus it goes on through one of those hundred-jointed analogies Flavel so much delighted in, but which only an exceptional genius like Dawson can make endurable. This Report, queer, yet clever in its way, secured, no doubt, the wonder and the claps of its friendly audience..

A change, now, however, passed over his soul that made, for ever after, mere time-wasting architecture of words abhorrent to him. "I have done with it," said he. Quite right. It was too ingenious to be earnest. A man who throws somersaults all along a road may prove to the crowd his skill in posturing, but cannot be in much hurry to get anywhere. Men do not so when they run to catch a train, or fetch the doctor, or find a fire-escape.

Henceforth, hunting after what he called "figure and finery" was postponed for the pursuit of souls. His sentences became brief and his illustrations homely. Though he never lost his fine ear for a felicitous phrase, nor his quick eye for a beautiful image, yet his determined directness of aim and at-you-at-once style caused him sometimes to appear abrupt. Everything was real and powerful. A clever sceptic once said to me, "Thomas Collins is the hardest hitter I ever knew."

His brother connects the change of style we have thus adverted to with the "fire baptism" of that Saturday prayer-meeting. He says, "After that memorable night he threw aside his abounding rhetoric and became a plain witness for the truth. I accompanied him the next day to his appointment at New Inn. Until then his sermons had always been too high-flown for my young apprehension, but the preaching of that afternoon smote me with impressions that have never been erased. Six in that service found peace with God." This was the hopeful beginning of one of the purest revivalist careers of modern times.

## CHAPTER III.

### WAITING.

A MISSIONARY once beautifully wrote :—"Remind my old friends of their covenant. Let them not forget the Christian's telegraph, all whose wires meet where Jesus sits at the right hand of God." Concert of prayer does not make assembling together necessary. It may be had, though oceans roll between the several pleaders. A document yet exists, the first signature appended to which is the name of Thomas Collins; it is an agreement of twelve young men, every morning at five o'clock, each in their closets, to implore the salvation of their townsmen. The early hour trained them to self-denial; the place saved their time,—no sooner into their clothes than at their work; the solitary exercise disciplined them to habits of secret communing; the harmony of thought and aim with brethren invisible and absent, was a daily lesson of the true method of Christian oneness. None can calculate the good that came of those retired yet combined intercessions.

Nominated in March, 1830, by the Rev. Francis Collier, Thomas Collins was warmly approved by the Quarterly Meeting, and passed on with due attestations to the District Meeting as a candidate for the Wesleyan ministry.

Much debate concerning the relative sphere of the Divine and the human in faith had arisen. How of grace? How of man? Any one offering for the ministry must expect orthodoxy, in regard of all questions currently controverted, to be tested. Queen Elizabeth is reported to have said to two nobles who addressed her at once, "My lords, you forget yourselves, I cannot be *both-eared*." A stripling under question has no such regal right of quelling dual examiners. In such case it is little to be wondered at if, in more modern English,



he gets *bothered*. A letter written after the District Meeting to an anxious friend thus speaks: "As on the matter of faith I agree in every point with John Wesley's teaching, it was impossible for me before such triers to get into any peril. I do not suppose that anybody imagined any unsoundness in me. The rumour that excited your unnecessary fear must have arisen from the fact that two preachers inadvertently rising at once interrogated me together; and not without some manifest distance between their own views. This simultaneous catechizing a little perplexed me. The words which in that confusion were uttered my memory cannot now recal. But they were received as satisfactory by the meeting; and, however imperfectly, yet certainly expressed what is my constant belief, that every effort of the human soul towards salvation is, and must be, assisted by the Holy Ghost."

He was accepted by the ensuing Conference, and placed upon the list of reserve, with special designation, at his own request, for labour in the foreign field. To this, as he then felt, he was bound in obedience to his father's public pledge. Summoned to London, he had interviews with the secretaries, and from impressions there received held himself in expectation and readiness for a speedy call. During this time of waiting he delivered a speech in Redditch, which, for its value, both biographic and intrinsic, is worthy of preservation:—

"Sir, were it not that as an intended Missionary my Christian friends have irresistible claims upon me, I should have refused an honour, the weight of which makes me tremble. But circumstanced as I am, pledged to the work, daily expecting the summons to enter upon it, and little likely to be present at another annual meeting, it seemed proper to those whose authority I respect that in a few words I should state the motives which induced me to lay myself upon this altar.

"To this work I was dedicated in my childhood; for it some here present remember how holy hands were laid upon me in the name of the Lord; towards it grace has inclined my heart, and Providence opened my way.

"The missionary design seems to me to embody all that is wise, and pure, and good. In it all sects concur,

all charity mingles. To fill its treasury the maiden plies her needle, and the widow casts her mite. There the pence of the child and the wealth of the merchant meet.

“In this path Jesus, Heaven’s own Missionary, led the way; His first Apostles and most devoted servants follow after.

“The Mission theme mingles with all my thoughts, and weaves itself into all my visions. To my mind, loaded legions of toiling summer ants call up missionary collectors; birds on the wing for other climes suggest missionary travel; while the crowds which, since the commencement of the recent gracious revival, come flocking hither, make the blessed missionary prediction recur:—‘It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and all nations shall flow unto it.’

“In London, a little time ago, in the attic of the Mission House, I joined in prayer with some young men just about to start for the foreign field. It was a melting time. In that hour their souls were sanctified, their tears dried, their fears scattered, their heads anointed, their hearts fired, and a few days after they were sent flaming off. May heaven’s blessing go with them!

“I join this work with all my heart, and would not be out of it for all the world.

“Some go abroad that they may be wise; so would I,—‘to win souls.’ Some to gather gems; so would I,—for the Saviour’s crown. No mine too deep, no shore too far, if but I may such treasure gain.

The love of Christ doth me constrain  
To seek the wandering souls of men,  
With cries, entreaties, tears to save,  
And snatch them from a gaping grave.

“I have read poetic farewells to ancestral halls; there is nothing of the kind for me to utter. ‘No foot of land do I possess.’ I have friends, however, to be parted from; but, being Christians, they, when the Master calls, hang no clogs about me. My father, whose former toil for me I might now remunerate, with ready mind gives me up. My mother, weak, afflicted, very affectionate,

who would spare me for nothing else, says, Go. Eight brothers and sisters, some quite young, hold my heart-strings with a strong grasp. What if returning I should find them destitute? What if I should have to weep upon their graves? What if, worst of all, they should have wandered far from God? Such thoughts touch me to the quick. But the Lord's commission is a fire in my bones. I must go. 'He that loveth father or mother, or son or daughter, more than Me is not worthy of Me.'

"I shall not be unattended. Where that lone Missionary sleeps, angels keep vigil; where he walks, they attend his steps; where he rescues a soul, they raise a song; whence he in the battle falls, they pioneer his way to heaven.

"I go, but the Spirit, the fount of might and comfort, is pledged to be with me. Pentecost did not exhaust the promise; it endures long as the last days. Floods of mercy, deluging all flesh, are yet due.

"I go, then, in the name of the Lord. So farewell, home! farewell, dear friends! Voices that have mingled with mine, knees that have bent with mine, hearts that have beat with mine, farewell! My way lies across the sea. I go to gather souls abroad, you stay to fold them here. But God, right soon, shall gather us all together where words of parting shall be heard no more. This remembering, welcome, waves! Welcome, winds. Welcome, foreign climes and arduous toil! Till that day dawns, dear friends, farewell!"

This adieu, so touching, and so beautiful, was premature. Months passed: he waited and the world wanted, but the laggard Church made no sign. The year rolled by, Conference came and went, still he was on the list of reserve.

This delay of men of burning soul, *whose qualifications have been tested and approved*, argues guilt somewhere. Heaven makes no mistakes. When the Master sends labourers for His field, there assuredly is maintenance for them, if His stewards do not withhold it.

Hope wearily deferred brings temptation and peril. Thomas Collins passed the trial unscathed; but cases have occurred, and not a few, in which men of ardent temperament, feeling that they cannot be quiet, and

finding that they cannot get recognised, lose patience, and set to work on their own account. Thus mushroom sects multiply, the outcome of zeal which elder organisations, if they had not been deficient in energy, wisdom, and courage, might have absorbed, regulated, and employed. Of this defect evil comes. These ecclesiastical splinters sometimes do in dark corners a modicum of good; but, at best, lack sobriety and weight. Ropes of sand, they have no cohesion. They run wild, and at length vanish as suddenly as they rose, too often leaving a sad stench of antinomianism behind them.

Few things of this sort would occur if the Church always remembered that expansion is the law of its life. Old hives should swarm. Too large concentration of membership binds its minister over to keep peace with the devil. Pastoral requirements swallow everything. No time is left to carry war into hostile territory. A tendency to repose, much to be guarded against, strongly affects well-circumstanced congregations. They easily adopt, "Rest, and be thankful," as their motto. The chariot gets into ruts. All things run in old grooves.

Evangelistic success is best achieved by frequent creation of new centres. As populations gather and grow, there should be fresh sanctuaries for them, and fresh heralds of the Gospel among them. Without these advances of the boundary the Church can neither utilize nor keep the stirring life which its past labour has begotten. Of course, such movements ask for guineas, and hence by many are dreaded as spectres or avoided as bores. "Too costly! cannot be done!" exclaim well-satisfied, well-provided worshippers. By caution thus cramped into stinginess ever-multiplying masses of our countrymen are left to live in ignorance and die in despair.

The practicability of further aggression upon the nation's darkness is proved by what occurs when quarrel wakes the slumberers. Secession takes place. Then, see, the Church gives double to keep up; the outgoers treble to get a start. That separated fragment, in its new fervour, erects structures and sustains agencies, which it had before been declared impossible for the united whole to do.

O when will love of Jesus draw forth more gifts than love of party? Perhaps, had we been true to our many-sided work, and ever kept at full stretch in evangelistic effort, we might have continued one in form and name, as, thank Heaven, *we are yet one in doctrine and general vocation*. God loves Methodism much, but He loves souls more. It may be that Providence has permitted our divisions because it can get more good out of us for the world sundered as we are, than we should ever have attempted if left whole as we were.

Earnest work found for everybody keeps unity in a Church better than any devices of polity, however wise, can do. Heart-hold is the strongest link, and fellowship in toil rivets it. The salvation of all England seriously meditated and vigorously set upon, would bring evangelical alliance nearer, and make it more real, than any other possible thing.

The time of delay was not wasted by Thomas Collins in idle regrets. It passed rapidly and happily amid scenes of joyous revival. The Circuit membership that year rose from two hundred and ninety to four hundred. Winning bread with his hands, he yet contrived by early rising to secure hours each day for study and prayer, and his profiting appeared unto all.

A little before this time the religious destitution of that large tract of Northumberland which borders upon Cumberland and Scotland had excited among neighbouring Christians earnest attention. The country was for the most part uncultivated, the population sparse, the villages far between, the cottages only here and there, wide apart, on the sides of the hills. For many years the people had been as sheep having no shepherd. Places of worship were remote. Those who desired such helps had Sabbath by Sabbath to walk six, eight, and even ten miles, to reach the nearest church or Presbyterian meeting-house. The spiritual darkness was dense. To this neglected region, in the year 1827, a few gentlemen of Newcastle determined to send, at their own expense, a Methodist preacher to work round among the scattered hamlets.

Mr. Marshall was the first selected. He settled at Wark, as the place most central for the district. The

reception he met with was encouraging. Though there were not more than two or three Methodists in the neighbourhood, there were many hungry for the word, who hailed with joy the advent of a man whose itinerant evangelism promised to bring the message of life to their very doors.

Mr. Marshall's method was to take his stand in the most public spot of every village he reached. There, by singing a hymn, he gathered the people, to whom he preached the Gospel. In about a fortnight, he had, by incessant travelling on foot, thus entered upon his labours at nearly every place within fifteen miles. In most instances requests were made that he would come again; and, generally, the kindness of the people provided both a lodging for the preacher and a room for the service.

After months of such work Mr. Marshall was succeeded by Mr. Leake, and he by Mr. Coulson, who, in turn, receiving appointment to a Circuit from the Conference of 1831, left the committee on the outlook for another.

The Rev. James Heaton directed their attention to Thomas Collins, with whom, at their request, he corresponded. As Wark was not yet a Conference Station, it was necessary before accepting to consult the President, the Rev. George Marsden, upon whose list of reserve his name then stood. The reply was, "It does not seem likely that for some time you will be wanted for any foreign Mission; you are, therefore, at liberty."

Thus permitted, he closed with the offer at once; and, on the evening of the next Sunday, October 23rd, delivered a farewell sermon in Redditch chapel. It was a word of caution to himself and to others, founded upon, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The after service was exceedingly impressive. As he stood within the communion rail, the leaders, with the whole company of praying men, gathered round, and in united prayer commended him to God.

Thus freed at length from secular employ, assured that he would be remembered in the intercessions of the church he was leaving, and laden with the benedictions of them that loved him, he went forth to his lifelong separation to the Gospel of God.

## CHAPTER IV.

### WARK.

THE Wark Mission included a district about fourteen miles by twenty. The country was wild and rugged. The roads, always bad, became in winter almost impassable. The work to be done required labour heavy and incessant. The hardships endured were in some respects greater than the privations so eloquently, and with such romantic interest, told of backwoods preachers by Milburn. It was here evangelism *on foot* ; primitive itinerancy unfortunately *minus* the horse and the saddlebags.

A letter says, " My journeys often lie along mere sheep-tracks ; across bogs where the hollow sound beneath the foot, until you are accustomed to it, is quite alarming ; or over barren heaths upon which you may travel miles without meeting a man or coming in sight of a house. Six times a week the Tyne ferry has to be crossed, and one night the boatman either could not or would not hear my call. It was a case of wade, or go back, so I just sought the shallowest place, went in, and came through."

To tramp thirty miles and preach three times ; to be benighted, or at least belated, on foggy moors ; to guess his way by starlight, or no light, across swamps that trembled as he trod ; and to ford rivers in cold December nights, were difficulties real, and not small. But inured to toil, of vigorous frame and manly courage, I find in him no pulings about these crooks in his lot. He remarks, " Were complaining of any use, I could fill sheets with that kind of stuff. I find it, however, much better to practise myself in Habakkuk's song : " Yet I will rejoice in the Lord : I will joy in the God of my salva-

tion." He shed tears in plenty over hard hearts, but none over rough roads; he lamented few conversions, but thought little of many miles. Whenever he touched upon these secular trials, it was always done with a merry sprightliness which made people rather envy his adventures than pity his toils. Thus a correspondent replies: "While reading your description, I quite fancied myself wandering among Northumbrian scenes and feasting on bannocks of barley-meal. So graphically was all brought before me by your most pleasant, humorous, *exulting* epistle."

The spirit in which he faced his work may best be seen in a transcript of his first day's diary:—

"Oct. 28th, 1831.—Here I am—home left—a new circle entered—a new work before me. My soul trusts in God. Before Him I resolve:—

"1. That I will rise early.

"2. That every Sunday morning, upon my knees, I will, in the form prescribed to Methodists for annual use, solemnly renew my covenant with God.

"3. That the whole time before breakfast shall be spent in Bible-searching, meditation, and prayer.

"4. That from breakfast to dinner shall be given to regular and consecutive study.

"5. That the entire afterpart of the day be sacredly devoted to active labour,—as visitation, preaching, or the like.

"6. That I will always have some selected text to which—embracing opportunities as they occur—my mind may turn and keep itself profitably practised in the composition of a sermon.

"7. That, unless compelled, I will leave no home without prayer.

"8. That wherever I am received to lodge, I will, if possible, morning and evening, gather all together for united family worship.

"9. That, if I can anyhow reach, I will never miss an appointment.

"10. That I will neither jest, nor trifle, nor waste time in parties.

"11. That I will faithfully rebuke sin wherever I see it.



"12. That I will seek ever to act as one altogether given up to labour for the salvation of the souls of men and the promotion of the work of God."

It needed no long survey to discover that in his field of toil there was much to be done. He found classes neglected, piety low, and things generally in confusion. He writes, "What can I do, young, ignorant, unguided, and alone? My soul groans out itself to God. Lord, instruct me; inspire me; control me; take Thine own way with me. That my dim eyes may discern Thy way, condescend to make it very plain to me. Only let me know it, and, with thy help, I will walk in it; for unto Thee, O God, moment by moment do I yield up myself."

"Darkness covers the people. Dulness freezes the Society. Some, indeed, are well-meaning and very sincere, but completely ignorant of the short and straight Gospel way. There is not much religion; and the little there is, not of the type that gives promise of diffusion. Professors here seem to have no idea of God's mighty saving purposes: they have not learned to care for others, and, as in such case generally happens, are everlastingly full of complaints about themselves. Sinners are perishing all around. My heart yearns for them. I am racked, and torn, and rent in pieces, because men *will* go to hell."

"Lord, give me converts; raise up for me helpers, men who in the freshness of first love will joyously go to and fro and tell Thy simple plan. O for more men of God!"

"God will come; will revive His work; will do it speedily. I have seen His tokens. For every dew, for every drop, good Lord, I thank Thee. But O for floods! when shall they come?"

The result of observations is well summarized in a letter to the Secretary of the Committee, dated November 15th, 1831.

"I have now preached at Wark three times. The Sunday evening congregation is good, but the people seem unprepared for the seed. Much ploughing and harrowing needs to be done. Few of the members really understand our system. There is a lack of that godly sociality which is the spirit, life, and leaven of genuine

**Methodism.** They are coy, and shy, and reserved about spiritual things. There is a coldness one towards another, which prevents co-operation, which sets men back to back when they should be embracing, and clenches the fist when the hand should be shaken.

“I have instituted a Sunday morning prayer-meeting: I turn out and look the people up beforehand: I visit the members and *haunt the backsliders* as often as I can.”

“At Gunnerton the congregation is good, and some hearers have an air of respectability. Last Sunday many hearts were touched. One stayed the class in much distress. If the Society could be made ‘bold to take up and firm to sustain the hallowed cross,’ many souls might there be won.

“At Bellingham the place is filled, but some who come are rude and disorderly. Last Sunday, a drunken man placed himself just before me, and gave frequent responses which, though accurate enough in sentiment, when given in his maudlin manner, did much to disturb the gravity of the young people of whom the congregation mainly consists. Their conduct, indeed, was little more decorous than his. I soon discovered from becks, nods, whispers, glances, and smiles, that the room was to them rather a place of tryst than of worship. As I reproved the poor drunkard I gave a word to them also, rebuking their toying and dalliance in the house of the Lord. I warned them against letting loose those passions which, being ill regulated, overthrew the strength of Samson. With a quiet glance at the cooing striplings, I added, this at least might be said for him, which I saw could not for most of them, *he had a beard*, though his folly lost it.

“In every place I find vowel marks (a) far too common in the class books.

“At Houghton I was much encouraged by visiting John Douglas, whom I found very ill, but very happy. At the next house a poor Papist woman ordered me to be gone. Had prayer been poison, she could not have hated it more. From thence I passed to Ann Sloe, a prime old Methodist, whose conversation edified me much, and more than paid for all.

“The Lord saves me from love of ease and all selfish desire. He has laid the weight of souls upon me; to

win them is my great concern. I want souls; I want them for God.

"Feeling is awaking. There is a stir in several places. I do not, however, suffer my expectations to be lowered and raised by the many changing signs of emotion here or there. *I have pledged my heart, whatever I may see or not see, to give full credence to God's sure promise.* So doing, I steadily, everywhere and always, believe and declare that God is about to visit us for good."

Coming, as Mr. Collins did, from a church fused into one by the fire of revival, the sense of isolation that came over him in Wark was a trial. "Here," he says, "I have neither confidant nor counsellor; no sympathizing spirit with whom I may respire congenial breathings; none to help in efforts of supplication; none to respond to the sighs of grief, share the heart-throbs of hope, or swell with me the song of gratitude. I am alone.

"At home I had friends strong in affection, full of holy sympathy, strangers to suspicion; we trusted each other with the very bottom secrets of our hearts."

Between people so akin correspondence could be neither slow nor dull. Oft the standard-bearer was strengthened to hold his banner firm and high by hearing how the same flag triumphed gloriously still upon the field from which he had just been called. A few specimen extracts will best show the quality of the cheering informations and assurances sent by those whom Mr. Collins was accustomed to call "heroes in faith and brothers in soul."

One writes, "February 27th, 1832. It will gladden your heart to hear of the welfare of our Zion. The shout of a King is still in our camp. Several lately have died in full exultation of faith. The work goes on. Bereavements do not thin us. Numbers daily increase. Seventy have been added during the quarter. The word is quick and powerful, fellowship is sweet, and the prayer-meetings more blessed than ever."

Another declares, "March 15th. God has visited my soul, and wonderfully increased His love within me. This deepening holiness soon led me to make a bonfire of my old sermons. I blush to think what dry, ambitious,

pointless things they were. I have given up all desire of being 'a nice preacher.' It has become terrible in my eyes to please men while we let them be damned. I long to be a plucker of 'brands from the burning.' Henceforth I will use great plainness, and aim at one thing."

A third narrates, "March 24th. At our recent special watchnight resistless power came down. Many were stricken. Some lay as if dead. We could not break up; the people would not go. The service was protracted until six in the morning. Conversions are occurring daily. Drunkards, boxers, poachers, and suchlike, the vilest and most abandoned druff of the town, are impressed."

"A fourth says, "March 26th. The leaven spreads. Leason, the carpenter, told in the lovefeast how at the Mill not long since he was alone. 'But now,' said he, 'we are four, and expect soon to be a dozen; for we have covenanted to attack sin wherever we find it.' O, it was a joyful sight on the evening of the day of our Quarterly Meeting to see the crowd of disciples thronging the table of the Lord. Brother, speak and spare not. You keep your place in our intercessions. Some of us bear you up daily in the closet, and not a few still publicly in our meetings send up your name to heaven."

The communications we have just cited, warm though they be, are ice itself compared with the burning words written to him by his father's hand. The thrilling, flaming utterances of love thus sent to him cannot but have stirred his soul beyond measure. Accept a sample:—

"Dear Son, in the most ample manner, as thou desirest it, I now, before God, discharge thy conscience from any fear that thy father hath any foible of thy youth against thee. I assure thee of my favour, and in God's name give thee my blessing.

"Thy mother loves thee more than ever. In recollection of thy infant endearments, of the bread won for her by thy labour while Providence called me away, of the comfort the Lord has given her through thy preaching and prayers, she almost sinks with excess of tenderness. Such thoughts fetch many teardrops from those eyes often dim with longing to see thee. Well, we shall soon

meet where partings are no more. As for myself, I have a glass which gives me oft a glimpse of thee. I give thee a lift by faith, and then shout 'Hallelujah !' on thy behalf.

"Seven of the Redditch squadron met the other day at your sister's house to pray for poor D—— G——. While Annette was pleading, a strange influence mastered the unhappy backslider in the tavern where he sat. Agitated and alarmed he rushed away, and was mysteriously drawn to the very room where the little company interceding for him was gathered. There, after no small struggle, his backslidings were healed. Glory be to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever !

"Birmingham, where I now am, is a mighty field of labour. I have raised two new classes, and am just commencing two others. I preach almost every night. I mean to leave few streets of the town without a warning. I set the crucified Saviour before the people. I show them Jesus, the tears, the groans, the sweat, the pillar, the scourge, the cross, the nails, the hammer, the silence, the vinegar, the gall, the prayer, the cry, the death, the spear, the grave, the broken seals, the affrighted soldiers, the rising Christ, the comforted disciples, the waiting multitude, the rushing wind, the baptism of fire, the crowd of penitents. While I thus witness, the Lord makes bare His arm, and many are saved.

"We knew thou wouldst not be negligent ; but thy letter has made us glad. Serve Bramwell's God as Bramwell served Him, and He will be with thee as He was with him. God with thee, thou wilt find no difficulty but may be surmounted ; no burden but may be borne ; no enemy but may be conquered ; no people but may be moved ; no sinner but may be converted ; no foul heart but may be cleansed.

"Dear lad, may God keep thee faithful unto death, and then give thee a crown of life. And when, the victory won and the harness off, I, in glory, see thee wave a conqueror's palm, I shall shout a thousand 'Hallelujahs !' through the heavenly air ; and, if the Lord permit, will give such a thunder-silencing burst of 'Glory

to God,' as shall make Heaven ring, pervade the mid-way spaces, and shake earth to its utmost poles. A shout loud enough to make Earth hear from the Celestial City will be none too big to utter thy father's joy when he shall see thee crowned."

The extracts given above were excellent fuel for the heart, but among the things which at this time guided and gave character to the mind of Mr. Collins, counsels written by the Revs. Francis Collier, James Heaton, and others, may be placed in the first rank. The substance of those advices, combined and compressed, I sub-join:—

"You have done well to accept the call to North-umberland. It saves for Gospel work a whole year of the morning of life; a year that will tell upon every year afterwards. Have no anxiety because it is not a regular station. The footsteps of Providence to us seem often slow, but the goal they reach is always right. God reigneth. Wait and trust. All will end well.

"Your rough untilled field is not without advantages. You will not be likely to find the ghost of Diotrophes walking there, and the rugged labour of its husbandry will be good for your soul's health.

"Set to work with all your heart. Be an early riser. Lose no time. Say 'No' to a friend, rather than waste an hour. Follow no mere impulses. 'Square your useful life below by reason and by grace.' Be a *Methodist*. Do nothing haphazard. Forecast. Lay plans, but, before committing yourself to any, pray for light, seek counsel, and exercise wary judgment.

"Let all your reading bear upon your work. Williams's 'Christian Preacher' would just now be valuable to you. Be sure that you study thoroughly John Wesley's writings. For purity and force, plainness and elegance, they have seldom been equalled. His distinct thought, appropriate language, and lucid arrangement, are exemplary.

"Kind approval wisely expressed by the sensible and devout is a favour from the Lord, cheering and helpful. But beware of the flatterer's net. If a man can but hold up and hold on, loud and fast, ignoramuses, with wonder smitten, rate him a nonpareil at once; and

being, as fools generally are, afflicted with a flux of speech, straightway assure their victim that he is *a very great preacher indeed*. Should any of these loose-tongued agents of the devil for the ruining of young ministers thus deal with you, let their manifest imprudence moderate your estimate of their judgment. Trust them not. Exaggerating adulators are almost invariably fickle. They go round like a weather vane, and are often among the first to wish their former idol gone.

“Set your mind upon excellence. Determine to be a workman, not a bungler. Carefully treasure up with your pen for future use every weighty thought and apt expression that occurs to you. Seek to have good sermons rather than many. Take pains with them. Opportunities for repetition should not make us idle, but excellent. We have chances for paring, pruning, enriching, and perfecting, such as no other ministers possess.

“Pay special attention to the framework of your discourses. Orderly arrangement helps memory, holds thought together, and accumulates force for the final appeal.

“Avoid subjects that take you out of your depth. Never let rhetoric outrun logic. Have aim. Know what you are at,—what you want to do.

“Subdivisions, if numerous, should not be announced. They are pegs for your own thoughts, but will only perplex those of others. Skeletons, though useful, are not beautiful, and should not be thrust nakedly before the eye.

“Be a preacher, not a reciter. In regard to delivery, Ward’s ‘System of Oratory’ would furnish you with many important suggestions. Admit no anxiety about mere words. Sound doctrine, godly unction, manly reasoning, and free speech, answer all evangelical ends.

“Whatever else you be, be holy. Adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things. Be a man of one business. In every place, to every person, in every way, do all the good you can.”

This “charge,” worthy of the faithful pastors who delivered it, is, as here presented, the elixir of three much read, much prized, carefully preserved epistles. How diligently Mr. Collins followed these godly admonitions may in part be learned from the Bible messages

selected, studied, and declared by him to the people of Wark. The following is a *resumé* :—

Depravity exhibited : John iii. 7. “Ye *must* be born again.”—The terrors of the Lord urged : Amos v. 12. “Prepare to meet thy God.”—Plain counsel given : Matt. iii. 7. “Flee from the wrath to come.”—The claims of God argued : 1 Kings xviii. 21. “If the Lord be God, follow Him.”—The yearnings of God expressed : Prov. xxiii. 26. “My son, give Me thy heart.”—The publican’s prayer : Luke xviii. 13. “God be merciful to me.”—The jailor’s question : Acts xvi. 30. “What must I do to be saved?”—The evangelical answer : Mark i. 15. “Repent ye, and believe the Gospel.”—Jesus wooing : Matt. xi. 28. “Come unto Me, all ye that labour.”—Jesus dying : 1 Cor. i. 23. “We preach Christ crucified.”—The forerunner’s cry : John i. 29. “Behold the Lamb.”—The mighty Saviour : Heb. vii. 25. “Able to save to the uttermost.”—The duty of faith : 1 John v. 10. “He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar.”—The way into the kingdom : Matt. xi. 12. “The violent take it by force.”—The Church’s charter : Matt. xviii. 20. “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.”—The Church’s fellowship : Mal. iii. 16. “Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.”—The Church’s solicitude : Hab. iii. 2. “O Lord, revive thy work.”—The aim of redemption : Titus ii. 14. “He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity.”—The model of perfection : 1 John iv. 17. “As He is, so are we in this world.”—The work for perfect Christians : Jude 20, 21. “Ye beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”

If, perchance, the eyes of any former supporters of that Northumbrian Mission should fall upon this page, surely their hearts will dance to think that by their means truths so pointed, plain, and precious, were preached in every village of that then spiritually sterile land.

The Wesleyan evangelists in Wark soon discovered the scene of their labours to be a land of darkness.



Gross ignorance prevailed. The famous versicle commencing,—

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,  
Bless the bed that I lie on,

was no unusual evening prayer. Manners were rude : women smoked. Morality was low : couplings unhal-  
lowed by rituals of the Church were common. Congre-  
gations were discouraging : “small,” “hard,” “rough,”  
or the like, are the phrases which described them. Errors  
were rife : a blacksmith, when rebuked for public, noto-  
rious vice, replied, “I cannot help it ; the Father has  
not drawn me yet !” That fatal lullaby of souls, “If I  
am to be saved, I shall be saved,” kept many asleep.  
The awakened, “waiting for the Lord’s good time,”  
stayed on the wrong side of the threshold of peace ;  
while “humble hopes” were supposed by even the  
more advanced to be the height of Christian attainment.  
Bigotry was intense ; J—— C—— was a most aban-  
doned drunkard ; he often beat his wife, and turned her  
out of doors at midnight. As she was a member of  
Society, Mr. Collins called upon the man, and earnestly  
entreated him to think on his ways. “I don’t want any  
new religions,” said he, “I keep to my Church and my  
parish priest. *I am for good works.*” Alas ! his moral-  
ism left him to get drunk the same night ; and over his  
cups he bragged that he was “true blue to Church ; no  
Methodist should ever turn him.” Poor wretch ! he was  
plainly faithful to the devil, whatever he might be to the  
Church. Prejudice is thick armour, and Satan loves to  
get his servants clad in it. Drunkenness was shameless ;  
men went intoxicated into the very sanctuary. S——  
R——, an aged schoolmaster, came in, and, seating  
himself just before Mr. Collins, took out his pencil, and  
in very odd fashion commenced diligently taking notes.  
At the close of a sentence, perhaps more sonorous than  
common, he leaped up and began loudly to applaud.  
“Friend,” said the preacher, “it saddens me to see your  
grey hairs thus publicly shamed ; leave off this drinking,  
or it will surely drown your soul in perdition.” “Hear  
him !” cried the pedagogue, “what a gift he has ! What  
language ! What composition !” “Repent,” was the  
reply, “and forsake your sins, lest they prove your

eternal ruin." "Choice words! so suitable! I assure all of you that I am a judge in composition, and I declare that it is wonderful!" In distress, Mr. Collins exclaimed, "Old man, be still, and listen, with prayer that God in His mercy may not suffer your heart to be for ever hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." "Ay, jewel! you are modest; but it was, I tell you, *weel* put together, *very weel*—*very weel indeed!*" Every rebuke being thus capped by a compliment, it was no easy task either to keep the congregation grave or to silence the poor sottish admirer.

Personal dealing with the conscience, direct inquisition after the soul's health, was, in that part of the country, so unusual as to be not merely distasteful, but positively alarming, to those who were first subjected to it. A letter says:—"The people can bear distant fire from the pulpit, but dislike home thrusts in the prayer-meeting. From private conversation some run off, and others answer roughly. The prophets forebode that my catechizing will drive the congregations away. At present they increase. But, issue as it may, I must do right. A clear conscience is better than a crowd."

Colwell, one of the places whither Mr. Collins had to go, lay beyond a moor, divided by an unbridged brook; at a shallow of the brook the neighbouring peasants had carefully deposited stepping stones: there, and at no other point, might the stream be crossed. The likelihood was small of a stranger on that pathless wild just hitting upon the proper spot. Mr. Collins, therefore, called at the nearest marshside hut to get a guide. His custom, to use his own phrase, was, "To feel the pulse of every soul he conversed with." In that walk, however, topics common to wayfarers had uprisen, and ere he was aware the ford was gained. Faithful to his invariable rule,—without preface, as time for it was gone,—he solemnly asked, "Have you made your peace with God?" The man looked confused, as if he could make nothing of such query. To put the matter more distinctly, with voice deeping to its lowest tone, Mr. Collins inquired, "Are you prepared to die?" The man turned pale, and, retreating a step or two, replied, in trembling accents, "*Sir, I hope you mean no harm!*"

Stories of "Burking," and "body-snatching," just then had thrilled the country with horror, surpassing anything in the recent panic of garroting. When, on that lone heath, by the level light of the declining sun, the stranger saw the left hand fishing for coin,—not easily caught in so thinly stocked a pocket,—while the right hand of the strong-limbed evangelist accidentally held up—with apparent menace—a stout oaken staff, he expected nothing less—what could he?—than that a blow to fell him, and a pitch plaster to stop his breath, would be the immediate sequel of such doom-suggesting questions. It required many affectionate Christian words to restore the poor fellow's confidence at all.

While thus faithful to the solitary sinner, fear never deterred Mr. Collins from giving rebuke to the shameless transgressors who flocked to their sin in crowds. He writes, "Last Sunday a rough lot of hulking youths were wasting the sacred hours in hurling stones, just outside Wark. I went and reproved them. They muttered 'muckle,' but the sport was spoiled, the camp broke up, and some even sauntered off to the preaching."

At first the world's sin and the Church's deadness were to Mr. Collins almost a crushing grief. A letter says, "I am heavy laden. I carry the burden of the Lord from place to place. I sigh and cry for the abominations of the people. My heart aches. My spirit groans all day long." On more than one occasion this sacred grief so overpowered him that his train of thought was lost in the gush of emotion, and the sermon, broken through, ended in pleadings so importunate, so accompanied with strong cryings and tears, that all present were melted, and the place became a Bochim.

The memoirs of Lopez and De Renty, Ann Cutler and Bramwell, read first at this time, greatly increased this growing love of devotion. He gave himself unto prayer. Wood and lonely wayside became closets. In such exercises time flew unheeded. Once, going by invitation to dine at Gunnerton, he stopped amid the solitary crags to pray, and heaven so met him there that hours elapsed unconsciously, and with difficulty he met the guests for tea with whom he should have dined.

Strong in the might of such baptisms, he became bold

to declare the cross, and willing to bear it. His fidelity, his determination to let none rest who would not come to Christ, made him too much like a living conscience for worldly people to feel him very welcome. Homes were therefore closed against him, and helps and hospitalities, formerly given, in some cases refused. He writes, "All who do so, get entered on my throne of grace list. O God, convert them! That is the requital I wish." Most of these early opposers became, ere he left, convinced of his sterling value; and concerning some of them his prayer was answered, and they will be his crown of rejoicing. He passed no wayfarer without a word, no homestead without leaving a tract; saw no sin without rebuke; left no company without a blessing. Like the Master, "he went about doing good." None were too low: he writes, "I had a round of prayer with a beggar." None were too distant: "I walked ten miles over the moors to see a dying man." At the end of that long, miry tramp he found the Gospel itself not welcome from his Arminian lips. The mother, a Presbyterian of "the straitest sect," would not shake hands with him whose pity for her son had brought him afoot so far.

Amid his labours he says: "My soul grows. I love God more than ever. My whole being is pledged to Him; my whole time employed for Him. O God, descend upon this Circuit: in saving power come down." The Lord heard. The following sentences, culled from diary records, are proof:—"The wheels begin to move." "Many could not get in at Barrasford." "Much power at Gunnerton." "Conversions at Manor House." "Glorious lovefeast at Wark." "Many saved at Haydon Bridge." "All over the Circuit warm souls are rising who are not afraid to lay on at the Lord's work."

The first revival outburst was at the Watchnight service held on Saturday, December 31st, 1831. It was a hallowed season. On New Year's Day a warm, earnest, pleading prayer-meeting occupied the forenoon. At one o'clock Mr. Collins preached with much liberty. During the afternoon a lovefeast was held. For number, and for holy fire, no such meeting had ever been held in Wark before. Thanks to God, for sending the Methodists there, were many and loud. "I once hated them," said

one, "but now I should not mind if 'Methodist' were printed on my back and on my brow." Some blessed the Lord for good received under their former preachers, Marshall, Leake, and Coulson. Others, with the joy of souls new born, gave testimony of their more recent conversion. A few bore witness, clear and strong, of the Spirit's sanctifying work within them. The speaking was plentiful and blissful. Mr. Collins writes: "The earnest breathings after purity, and sighs for revival, the frank simplicity and godly sincerity of the Society, both edified me and delighted Mr. Wilson, who had come to help me."

As visitors had come in from places all around, the little town was moved and astonished at the influx. Many came to the evening service. "The fire so burned that," says Mr. Collins, "I could scarce hold myself in the pulpit. In the midst of the sermon, able to contain no longer, we burst into song; and as the sweet chorus rang through the place, we felt that heaven was begun below." The happy day was closed by a solemn renewing of the covenant with God. When the hour for separation came, the people wept that they must leave. One young man came forward to tell that he had lost his doubts in the arms of Jesus; and another, that he had left his sins in "the Fountain opened." When some rehearsed to a poor invalid the pleasures of the day, "O ninneys," said she, "how *I should* have enjoyed being there!" "That you would, Tibby," was the reply. "Ay, it *was* a *top* meeting!"

Thenceforth Wark held Methodist name. It had grown into such favourable repute, that I find requests from neighbouring Societies to Mr. Collins, when they held special gatherings, "Pray send over to us some of your lively souls."

The work continued. Take specimens. "Last Sunday, at Manor House, a mere child burst forth into a prayer that touched me and moved many. Who can tell? God may—He often does—begin a glorious revival by opening the mouth of babes." "Last night a poor backslider was so stricken that he could not keep up with our company as we returned from Suttly Row. We were made aware of his lingering behind by hear-

ing his cries for mercy. He had fallen upon his knees upon the road. We returned and prayed with him there until he received comfort."

Pastoral visits bring contact with odd varieties of character. Mr. Collins writes, "Yesterday I went to visit a woman dying of cancer. After some time spent in conversation, seeing her husband, an openly irreligious man, and her nephew, a strict Presbyterian, employed among the timber at the door, I stepped out and invited them to join us in worship before I left. 'This,' replied the nephew sourly, 'is no season for prayer. We are not required to be always on our knees. "Not every one that saith, Lord! Lord! shall enter the kingdom." "I must work the works of Him that sent Me." As he seemed inclined to enlarge, I said, 'Fewer texts, friend, will suffice. Your industry will be impeded as much by stopping to quote as by coming in to pray. I want an answer, not an argument. Will you join us, or not?' 'I will not.' 'Will you, old man?' 'I will, honey. So, marvelling that in such a case the sinner should come and the saint refuse, I turned in again, and trust that the poor afflicted woman found the Lord to be with us."

On January 10th, 1832, the President sent to the Superintendent of Redditch a summons for Mr. Collins to enter the ranks of the regular ministry as supply in the place of a brother then lately deceased at Kendal. That official document was transmitted by his friend Henry Breeden with this endorsement: "I have the honour to send what, I trust, will prove to be the *life-warrant* of thousands of souls."

• This call was thought, by the Committee of the Wark Mission, to be so untoward for their work that they—having learned Mr. Collins's value, and knowing his growing usefulness—asked him to allow them to beseech the President to send some other, not previously employed, man." Though he longed for an acknowledged place among Methodist preachers, yet his love for those sheep in the wilderness prevailed; and, therefore, despite the perils of bog and ferry, despite the vile roads and hard toils, he at once agreed to stay if they could get consent. The petition was granted, and until the next Conference he remained.

Though nameless in the "Minutes" he was summoned to, and was actually at, the District Meeting held that year in Sunderland. As it was intended that the Mission should be offered to the Connexion, and the private arrangement terminate in a regular appointment at the next Conference, it seemed to the Chairman, the Rev. V. Ward, that though Mr. Collins was technically without "*locus standi*" in that meeting, there were sufficient public reasons for requesting his presence there.

Journal records show how he was employed during his visit. "May 24th.—Heard Casson at Monkwearmouth. It was a good time. The Lord was present to heal. 25th.—Spent the whole day in the District Meeting. 26th.—Visited various Christian families with Casson and Mortimer; had some *good rounds* of prayer. At night heard Casson again. It was a glorious time. Many were saved. 27th.—Returned to Gateshead; heard Mr. Greensmith preach out of doors. He it is who, when a boy, had his eyes opened at Bramwell's prayer. After the sermon we marched to the chapel; numbers went in with us; we had an excellent prayer-meeting, and some were saved."

One asked, "Did Mr. Collins pray in your house?" "Pray? Ay! he *just did*; and *it was worth hearing too!*" The replicant in that colloquy had, perhaps, not sufficiently perceived that heart and sympathy, not ears, are what men should give to prayers; yet his unusual phrase lets us know that already prayer had become Mr. Collins's element and power.

Ere we pass we will insert a word of warning which internal evidence shows to have been composed within a short time of his departure from Wark.

"Why so earnest? Because I love you, and would far rather make you angry than let you fall unwarned into hell. I fear no frown, but the frown of God; and ask no favour, but the favour of God. I desire not your smiles, but I long for your souls. Probably soon I shall have to cross the sea and preach to men of strange tongue. What do I say? Who knoweth the future? Death may frustrate all. This may be my last mission. Your churchyard yet may prove to be my long home, and your hands may carry me there. If any tear embalm

the spot, you may shed it. All this may come, ere the fortnight yet remaining shall have passed. Two weeks ! nay, this issuing breath may be the last. Well, and if I thought it would be, it should be expended crying, ‘ Turn ye, turn ye ; for why will ye die ? ’ ”

These strong yet tender words are a fair type of his method of appeal. In prayer and work, conflict and victory, the months had worn away. August came, that annual turning time of the Methodist wheel of fate. The draft of Stations appeared ; and, lo, Mr. Collins found himself in line with Wesleyan Ministers at last. Appointed, however, not to any foreign land, but one of the allotted Ministers of Sandhurst, in sunny Kent.

From the many converts and quickened church of Wark he, therefore, took his leave, and writes :—“ I left at last, weeping much, and amid the tears of many.”



## CHAPTER V.

### SANDHURST.

MR. COLLINS left Wark, August 21st, 1832 ; and set sail for his new Circuit, from Shields, on the 27th. The ribald speech and gambling of the seafarers soon compelled his faithful rebuke. The Captain, resenting admonition, roughly answered, "If anybody here does not like our ways, there is the door, he can walk out ; and the sooner he does so the better we shall be pleased." Taking matters into His own hand, the Lord helped His servant. Squalls began almost immediately. The Captain, called to the deck by his duty, had little more cabin shelter, and the passengers little more play. The rude winds increased to a gale ; and the voyagers, pale and alarmed, became only too glad to accept an invitation to prayer. The manifest power with God of their fellow-traveller won esteem from them. They requested daily service ; and, thenceforth, through the time on board, the Captain at every meal requested "the reverend gentleman to say grace." None could have treated him more respectfully if by authority he had been rated chaplain of the ship. When the weather cleared, and the sickness wore away, the splendid cliff and coast scenery, which passed before them like a gigantic panorama, more than paid for all.

On September 1st he safely landed at Gravesend ; and went straightway to the Wesleyan Superintendent, Mr. Gilpin, for advice about lodging. "Not every minister can bear Saturday intrusions with equanimity. Perhaps this accounts for Mr. Collins's quiet observation,—“A good man but snarly rather, I thought.” A "*quid pro quo*" for the time consumed was found. He obtained Mr. Collins a Methodist home, and Mr. Collins preached for him next evening at the chapel. That service was

memorable. Sinners were pardoned, backsliders reclaimed, believers sanctified. Fifteen names were recorded. Hearing of this, his father wrote:—"Those fifteen souls were God's seal of your call. Remember, henceforth, what God hath sent you to do. Talk much to your Master, and much about Him. Have the sayings of Jesus in your head, heart, and mouth. Take, as the disciples did, the bread from His hand to distribute. His word will draw multitudes, and His bread feed them. O, may you in age look back upon thousands converted!"

The day following that night of power, taking his way through Rochester, Maidstone, and Cranbrook, he reached his allotted place. To guide him to his home at Sandhurst, an aged sexton met him at the coach. Though Mr. Collins was but in the twenty-third year, his full form, sun-browned face, and grave demeanour left little look of youth about him. In their way they passed a crowd busy at athletic sports: "Ah, Sir," said his venerable companion, "when they get *as old as you and I*, they will not care for such vanities!"

The now almost forgotten "Derby Secession" was to Mr. Collins no small trouble at this stage of his ministry: not that it ever reached his circuit. It rent his heart, not his flock. Among the "Arminians," as the seceders were designated, were many early and intimate companions, dear to him as his own soul. Some of them, full of hope of winning one so earnest to their side, sought to scare him from his place in Methodism by raising before him the ghost of a tyrannical Superintendent. After suggesting a multitude of absurdities which authority, *if delirious*, might require, one concludes with:—"And, of course, you must obey your chief pastor in all things."

This is the common target of the dissatisfied. An odd thing in this line one has sometimes seen,—a man with a conscience so decidedly against ministerial subordination that it could not by any means yield the deference of a junior colleague; but, somehow, though the power of a Rector is far greater, and less checked, than that of a Superintendent, his conscience and a curacy convene exactly.

Mr. Collins discovered this alarm of authority to be a mere bugbear. No servile submission was ever required of him. He found, as most men of Christian love and common sense do, that matters worked smoothly enough. His reply was, "I never received anything but kindness from Wesleyan ministers. Among so many, some, perhaps, may not be so full of love as God is willing to make them. Multiplied up to our number, would "Arminians" be free of such? As for myself and my Superintendent, we go together; we love one another; and, when I show any tokens of knowing best, he makes, I assure you, no trouble of submitting to me."

Many who go out of the house of Methodism get the strange hallucination that they take all the fire with them: one, thus thinking, wrote to him:—"Methodism is too cold for a revivalist." Had the charge of coldness been true, what is the use of a revivalist, if that be a reason for his leaving? Where would he be so much needed? Where could he be so suitably placed as in a chilling church? These thoughts not occurring, his friend, determined to have him from the ice-house, says, "We will pray you out of it." Heaven is our helper in holiness, not our partisan in strife. It is unseemly to attempt to engage Omnipotence in small plots of proselytism. Mr. Collins calmly replied, "Closet exercises should have higher aim. Do not write to me thus. Let us commune, as of old, how best to bring showers of blessing down. I see my calling. I have no doubt. There is not the shadow of a reason to justify my thinking for one moment of leaving Methodism. The obstacles you dream of are all imaginary. A few cannot work in my manner; but none oppose, none hinder me. I am as free and as fearless in doing good as you can be. With success already beyond my expectations, and a door of usefulness opened wider far than I can see how any other church could open before me, it would be a sin to think of retiring. To my work grace has fitted, God called, and Providence appointed me."

The great themes of Methodist preaching in early times were Repentance, Faith, and Holiness: may it in this be *semper eadem*! We deprecate any salvation by wholesale, achieved by slurring over any of these indi-

vidual experiences. Ever and anon classical tutors are threatened with loss of scholars by the popularity of new methods of teaching, set forth, with manifold puffery, as "Nature's own," or the like. On examination, the secret of swiftness will be found to consist mainly of doing the pupil's construing for him, and leaving the grammar lessons out. Celerity obtained by omission is theologically fashionable just now. In many quarters convincing speech is denounced as legal. The fallow ground is unbroken. Men are in such haste to sow that they cannot wait to plough. In their husbandry the Gospel seed-basket is everything. Share and harrow lie idle.

Diligent toil may—if the generation be gainsaying—win only slow success. Who does not hanker for vast results? May God give unto His Ministers seals multitudinous as the converts of Pentecost! But let them—far rather let them—be few and true, than count up into crowds and be spurious.

The salvation of a soul is heart-work, not head-work. It begins with a broken heart, it becomes a peaceful heart, it issues in a holy heart. Salvation cannot be learned off, or got by rote. "Did Jesus die for all men?" "Yes." "Are not you a man?" "Yes." "Then did not Jesus die for you?" "Yes." "Do you believe that?" "Yes." "Is it not true that he that believeth shall be saved?" "Yes." "You believe: then, clearly, you are saved."

Ah! this salvation by syllogism is a delusion. "Jesus died for me," minified into the mere premiss of an argument in an impenitent lip, is as worthless as any Shibboleth bigot ever framed. Precious truths so held are in *mortmain*, and are harvestless as seed corn in a mummy's hand. Thousands can get through the narrow steps of that poor mental exercise only to realize that in its bosom lies a sophism, and that its conclusion is a lie.

Woe befalls any church multiplied by such accessions; as John Bunyan would say, "They have tumbled over the wall, not come in at the Wicket Gate." A Gospel minus repentance, a salvation without conviction of sin, a faith without trust, an assurance by logic, and a religion without holiness,—what will it all issue in but an eternity without hope?

Errors of this kind—very rife to-day—were in existence then. I subjoin, with brief answers appended, questions sent to Mr. Collins, during that period of strife, by some of his polemic friends.

*Q.* Why consume time in preaching such A B C as that men should forsake their sins ?

*A.* Because we care rather to be right than to be quick. Saving time by leaving out God's commandment, "Cease to do evil," might lose eternity.

*Q.* But supposing that they do, as you tell them, forsake their sins, will doing so save them ?

*A.* No. But not doing so would damn them. A thing not in itself saving may yet be necessary to salvation. Though the first step does not finish a journey, yet none can reach the goal who will not take it. The query is of no force against preaching this, but, it is allowed, has **resistless** force against permitting preaching to stop short at this.

*Q.* Until faith be exercised in Jesus as a Saviour, are they not, whatever else has been done, unjustified and unregenerate ? And if unjustified and unregenerate, what better, or safer, Godward, will they be for leaving one, or more, or all their outward abominations ?

*A.* No better, if that forsaking be made ground of self-dependence and practical Christ-refusal ; but much better, quibble about it who may, if done by Divine aid, in submission to Divine will. Undoubtedly the putting away of sin—the penitent "clearing of themselves," denotes a state far better than they were in when their life was vice and their purpose rebellion. Though not cured, they are surrendered to treatment ; the physician has **them** in hand.

*Q.* Is not all this telling a man to repent mere delaying of him from the cross ?

*A.* Nay, it is in front of the cross, and with motives fetched from the cross, that I urge him to repent.

*Q.* But if you have him there, with Jesus in view, why not tell him to believe ?

*A.* I do so tell him. But ordering my requirement of faith after God's own method, I claim it first for the Divine statements concerning wretched, damnable, helpless self ; and then for the record given of His Son. Conviction of sin is a necessary antecedent of saving trust. Who seeks food until he is hungry ? or shelter until he apprehends danger ? or medicine until he knows himself to be sick ? Seeing that men will neither seek, nor care for, nor accept, a Saviour until they feel themselves to be sinners, with this we begin,—this testimony we press home,—this word of God we will have believed : then presenting the crucified Lord, as Paul teaches, "The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith."

*Q.* You talk as if "reconciliation" were a thing divinely willed merely. Does not Paul (2 Cor. v. 19-21) teach that it is accomplished ? God is reconciled. Why do you maim the message ? Why do you not tell that Gospel—that good news—everywhere—to every man ?

*A.* We should be sorry to clip, or cloud the magnificence of God's

free love, yet let us not confuse things. God was reconciled to *the world* in Christ eighteen centuries ago; *to me* when in the act and moment of faith I accepted Christ. Reconciliation to humanity was planned in eternity, justified on Calvary, proclaimed in the Gospel, and is true for ever. Reconciliation with individual men is accomplished, realized, and experienced, when sin is renounced, the Saviour embraced, and the Gospel trusted. Atonement was accepted *from Christ* the moment He offered it; accepted *for me* the moment I claim it.

*Q.* Why pray for faith? Why pray for that which the Bible calls upon you to do?

*A.* Dare you go through with that principle—never to pray for anything which the Bible calls upon you to do? The fact is, through the whole process of salvation, God is a giver and man a receiver. It may foreclose controversy, however to remember that faith is prayed for in one sense, and exercised in another. The Holy Ghost gives not the act of faith, but the light, power, and disposition to believe. In that, as—and only as—in every other acceptable act, “He helpeth our infirmities.” Why should not this fact be devotionally acknowledged? If I may pray for love, or joy, or the like, why may I not pray for faith?

Mr. Collins's own words on this subject are valuable. He says:—

“Man possesses, and often employs, the terrible power of resisting God. In preaching, I deal with man: my chief business is then, of course, to get him to cease the exercise of that awful power. In prayer, on the contrary, I deal with God, and ask the gift, the plentitude, and the continuance of the Spirit. Addressing the penitent, I bid him believe; addressing the Lord, I say, ‘Lord, help this poor creature!’ This is the old Methodist way; this is my way. I find it succeed, and do not intend to alter it.”

Among those who at that time broke away from Wesleyanism it was not unnatural that in the first spring of freedom from old standards of orthodoxy, much diversity, and some confusion of thought, should arise. Except upon the one point concerning faith, the opinions uttered in the preceding questions, though they were held by many, have but the authority of the individual sending them. They are inserted here because of the intrinsic importance of the matters discussed, and not as any supposed manifesto of the minds of the Derby seceders. Partisans often outgo their leaders. John Wilkes told George III., “I assure your Majesty that I

never was a Wilkite." The Rev. H. Breeden, I know, would never have endorsed the queries of his puzzled disciple. The little book, "A Call to Holiness and Usefulness," published by him at that time, is free from all such theological fog; and has in it, perhaps, not ten words which, for any dogmatic reason, I should care to alter. It is just such an appeal as one would like all churches to read. It is further due to say that the great influence Mr. Breeden at that time wielded over the mind of Thomas Collins was never marred by the slightest effort to gain him as a proselyte. Subjoined is a specimen letter, the plain intent of which was not to win an "Arminian," but to inflame a Methodist preacher:—

"Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." What an awful thing it would be if we who are employed about the sanctuary should preach salvation and then go self-damned to hell! Holiness is everything. O, what beauty there is in holiness! Let us seek her, court her, win her, love her, and that for her own sake alone.

There is power in holiness. I want Thomas Collins to have as much of this power as any man under the stars. Stick to your Bible. Be much on your knees. Follow Jesus. Thus get power that will make strong-hearted sinners bend.

I often wish that I had opportunity to converse with you. John Smith had an inheritance from Nelson. I received from Smith. Perhaps I may pass over a little instruction to you. The following hints are echoes of his words:—

1. Be a man of decision. An administrator, a popular man, a winner of souls,—which is it to be? At Madeley the very worldlings said of Fletcher, "There goes the soulsaver!" Make up your mind whether you will be a soulsaver or not.

2. If you decide to be one, thenceforth make that your business; be devoted to it; compel everything to bend that way; throw all your energies into it.

3. Be restless. Success is not likely, in our age, to overtake the world's necessities. While we live, we can never have done. Be always tenderly yearning for sinners. This is a happy unhappiness. A man full of Christ-like tears is a noble creature. Such concern melts men, and tells with God.

4. Keep your eye single. Having chosen your aim, be true to it. Do nothing idly or without meaning. Be not of those who do with the right hand and undo with the left.

5. Study the Acts of the Apostles. In those Acts lie the seeds of all evangelistic methods. Cultivate fertility of expedient. In principle be fixed, but in action manifold.

6. In composing sermons first fix your eye on what you mean to hit. Let nothing in that is not meant to strike. Ask not, "is it pretty?" but, "Will it do the thing I wish."

7. In selecting the sermon to be preached consider the people, not yourself; take, not the one that will give you the least trouble, nor the one that will win you, as a preacher, the most credit; but that which is most appropriate to the current need. If the people be hungry, it is better to feed them than dazzle them; even though you were able to do it with the sheen of diamonds.

8. Choose your hymns carefully. Give them out heartily, and with much inward devotion. In your first prayer plead until the people move; wait until the baptism of power falls. You must not preach without the power.

9. Preach as a dying man to dying men. How would you speak if you were sure that in sixty minutes you, with nineteen others from that room, would be in eternity? and at present, of all the score, you only saved? In such a case how would you entreat, and warn, and weep! Do as much like that as you can every time you stand with God's message of mercy among poor sin-smitten, dying hearers.

10. Never doubt either God's presence, God's word, God's pity, or God's power.

11. During the closing prayer remember that success or failure will be protracted through eternity. Dash jewels to atoms rather than miss your point.

12. If strength permit, marshal the after meeting yourself. Study the peculiarities and tastes of the people among whom you labour. In mode be pliant. Let not the lion of your will roar about mere methods. Meet prevailing notions of decorum as far as may be consistently with the work being done.

Teach the people to confess what they receive, and, for yourself, watch, pray, and believe.

Who that reads this precious communication can wonder at the affection Mr. Collins bore to the writer of it?

A lively friend—deprecating any breach of amity between them on the ground of the secession—thus wrote to Mr. Collins:—

“We preach Christ the common Saviour. The church needs builders at back as well as front. Do not you front workmen despise us at the rear. We are neither working for another master nor for another job. Do not make it too great an offence that we have picked up a few stones not polished enough for place in the front wall; now they are built into the back, they fit, and stick, and serve better than you would have thought.”

Mr. Collins, in his reply, said:—

“Many Ministers fear new and unusual methods; many people love them. When the difference, arising from the caution of the one and the love of novelty of



the other, gets dilated into division, that is much to be deplored: yet, if the result could be confined to setting a few hundred warm-hearted men free to make onslaughts on the devil's kingdom in their own fashion, some good and little ill would come of it. But if, instead of working as converters, they set themselves to be proselyters,—denouncing and seeking to destroy the church which, after all, won them to Christ,—that is wrong; all wrong; very wrong. God forbid that one word of mine should sanction such a thing! Methodism is my mother, my father's mother, the mother of millions. It tears me to see her torn.

“Though I shall never leave the old body, that does not prevent me from loving Henry Breeden as I do my own soul. I shall ever wish ‘God speed’ to him and his helpers so long as they keep to the glorious work of plucking brands from the fire. Let those who have gone from us seek lost sinners as fast as they can. My ‘Hallelujah!’ shall not be wanting for any prodigal who by their means returns; but every one seduced from the elder Society is an injustice and a shame.”

On the same subject Mr. Collins wrote to a perturbed Methodist:—

“Talk as little as possible of the secession. The time others give to prattle give you to prayer. The Spirit will descend for asking. A general revival would—best of all things—heal the wounds, hush the murmurs, and supply the wants of Methodism. Work, full work for God, would leave us little time for quarrelling; and devotion, full devotion, would leave us no inclination. O how little love, life, and labour many make shift with! Be not of the number of Methodists who spend more time in grumbling at ‘Ranters,’ and cavilling with ‘Arminians,’ than they do in crying, ‘Thy kingdom come.’ Let us not live to the world in the least degree. Let us love God, and leave all to Him.”

The valuable, vigorous letter of Mr. Breeden was followed almost immediately by another from his father's hand, written in his most thrilling, flaming manner:—

Son, why may you not be the holiest man that ever lived? With a Bible full of promises, and a God full of delight to see you “Divinely confident and bold” to claim them, what is there to hold

you back? God would have you holy: meet God in His purpose. O, how He rejoices over holy souls to do them good!

Grace has oceans unexplored. Prophets, apostles, and worthies have left a fulness unexhausted and untried. Why should not my Thomas be the man to fathom some new deeps of God?

Perhaps you will say, "Father, why not do this yourself?" Thanks be to God, who, through our Lord Jesus Christ, hath made me, poor worm, partaker of His holiness! I have been wonderfully blest of late. All in my soul is love. That heaven and earth are full of the majesty and glorious influence of my adored Creator and Redeemer has become to me an experience. I believe Him whom my soul loveth to be everywhere, because I find Him everywhere. Through faith His Light, and Power, and Purity flow in. It often seems as if the spirit must break through the flesh. At such times, like a silken vessel filled with gas, I soar above the region of clouds. Why do I ever sink again? I trust the Lord will help even poor me to spring, and rise, and still shoot forward through the pure sunlit ether, until, at Heaven's portal, Jesus stretch that same hand that was nailed to the wood, catch my fluttering soul,—I believe He will!—and bear it through the blood-washed bands, safe and shouting, to the throne.

But, son, while thus by grace I am all for God, yet my measure is very limited. My retrospect differs terribly from yours. Twenty years of life's prime were by me expended in desperate despairing sin. Through all these gloomy years I floundered in the Slough of Despond. It was dreadfully broad were I came across. If my foot had not found rock just when it did, I believe I should never have tried again. Alas! when saved, twenty years more were only half improved. I lingered in a low, doubting, unworthy state. I awoke not to the glory, I got not the grasp of holiness. It is better with me now. Hallelujah! I am the Lord's and He is mine. But O those squandered years! The thought of them makes me wither, and weep, and sigh, and cry, and vex. In sight of the spiritual imbecility entailed upon me I mourn, and humble myself, and nauseate myself. But neither prayer, nor labour, nor agonising outstretchings of the soul, can undo the damages of those forty years. God hath forgiven me all, for which now, and eternally, I will praise Him: but that, surely, is no reason why I should forgive myself.

These then, son, are the reasons why you may surpass me. From all this mercy hath preserved thee.

Dwell ever where the dayspring shall shine direct upon thy heart. Keep a diary, that thou mayest be able to bear true and thankful witness among God's children how clearly thou hast seen the King's face and how often.

That God may help thee to lead believers to sunnier heights than any ever did before thee is the prayer of thy father.

An early Sandhurst letter observes: "My Superintendent is a useful, much respected man, and his wife a mother-like woman. I live with them. The children are affectionate, the home comfortable, and the situation

rural. Hop-gardens, beautiful as vineyards, surround us everywhere." The Circuit was large: he remarks, "Of leg exercise there is no lack here." There were eighteen places upon the Plan, and some of them were fourteen miles distant. These things caused Mr. Collins no anxiety; he seemed to think no amount of walking, praying, and preaching to be hard. His own record is: "Bless God for calling me into His work. To labour for God! What a high vocation! I will be no loungers. I mean to be faithful. I do in some measure give myself unto prayer; but O that I could feel that experience of Gregory Lopez mine,—'Every breath is prayer!'"

The religious condition of the district was low. At Cranbrook, Huntington, the Antinomian, and Paine, the Infidel, were born. The evil principles of both had leavened the whole countryside. Rude scoffers abounded in the ale-houses, and Antinomians in the pulpits. By the Wesleyan Societies a banner for the truth had, in that region, been long upheld. The members were steady, the workers fervent, diligent, and willing to bear the cross.

It was a transition time in Mr. Collins's ministry. The rough fidelity, stern rebuke, and Boanerges thunder acquired among the Redditch revivalists, had been much softened in hours of lonely walk with Jesus passed in Northumberland. The tender pathos, which in after years gave such sweetness to his preaching, was beginning to appear. One of his hearers says, "Constant Divine communion secured for him a fulness of the Spirit that inflamed his soul with love, and melted it with pity. The anointing that was upon him caused his voice to tremble with emotion, while it clothed his word with power. Such a man, among such a people, could not labour in vain. The wisdom and unction with which he spake did 'every conscience reach, and sound the unbelieving heart.'"

Mr. Collins's entrance upon his work was marked—no marvel—by fierce onsets of the devil. The following is an early entry in his Journal: "In the night I was forced to rise from my bed for prayer, so hard did hell assail me." Within two days he writes again: "I

wrestled with God in a wood for deliverance from temptation." He was heard, for soon the record says: "God is my Refuge and Salvation every moment. My soul is happy. I am fully dedicated. I am given up to God, and, by the help of grace, ever intend to be. I love souls, and God has full possession of my soul. My determination is to act and speak only for God and for His people."

Of preparation for Sunday take the appended instance: "I spent Friday in secret fasting, meditation, and prayer for help on the Lord's day." That day is registered thus: "At Peasemarth Divine unction descended. About the middle of the sermon a man cried out; at the cry my soul ran over. I fell to prayer, nor could we preach any more—for cries and tears all over the chapel. We continued in intercessions, and salvation came."

Mr. Collins instituted throughout the Circuit early Sunday morning gatherings for intercession. To be present at these blessed matin services he often walked miles, regardless of the fact that he would have to preach three times in places remote from each other, afterwards meet classes for tickets, and finally close the day with protracted and exhausting labours of prayer. The toil he underwent would have broken down any constitution not of the very strongest.

It will give fair insight into the work of the Circuit to produce jottings of the first three Sabbaths spent in it.

"Sunday, September 9th, 1832.—Goudhurst.—Held a prayer-meeting at six o'clock: one in distress. Gave tickets at eight: two in distress. Preached at half-past ten, and gave tickets after. Held a short prayer-meeting immediately after dinner. Preached at half-past two, and gave tickets after. Found one mourning soul out at the tea table. Preached at six o'clock; held a prayer-meeting; several persons were in sorrow. As the youths of a school attending the chapel seemed much affected, I announced a meeting for them at five o'clock the next morning. They came, and several of them received comfort."

"Sunday, September 16th.—Preached at Wadhurst, In the morning service two young women — whose hearts had been broken the Sunday before, and who had

passed the week in deep affliction—were comforted. In the afternoon I preached again. For the evening, went on to Ticehurst; preached there, and held a prayer-meeting. The work was hard, and the impression small. The people seemed untrained for such services. I had to dismiss them with little visible fruit. O God, come down upon this place."

"Sunday, September 23rd.—Preached at Tanhouse. Many wept under the word. I gave tickets after, and then passed on so Northiam, where, in the afternoon, I preached and gave tickets again. The evening service was at Brede. In the prayer-meeting with which we closed the day there many wept aloud, and some entered into liberty."

The Rev. James Harris informs me that he had but recently joined the Northiam Society when Mr. Collins preached his first sermon there, the notice of which has just been given. The text was, "No man cared for my soul." The word laid on the hearer such a spell that—quite against his wont—he followed the preacher to Brede. Special power—as the Journal has told—descended there. The loud cries of the awakened, and of those who interceded for them, sounding strangely in the unaccustomed ears of the young Methodist, he, next morning, asked Mr. Collins, "Was there not much wild fire last night?"—who answered, "Well, brother, even that might be better than no fire. Do not judge too early, or too harshly. Consider, God employs workmen upon different work. Naturally, and wisely, their gifts and methods vary. As I do not complain of quiet labourers who slowly and silently bring pillars of the temple to polished perfection, so neither should they murmur at me because blasting in the quarry makes a noise, and raising rough stones proves to be rough work."

That similitude fairly set forth the kind of results Mr. Collins's labours frequently accomplished. Take a case. Thomas Eldridge was a wild young fellow, given to drink, and a Sabbath-breaker. Rude and burly, he was a mighty fighter, the terror of peaceable people. He had never gone near a place of worship, unless to scoff at those who went. Strange tales told of this new preacher led the man to think, as he expressed it after-

wards, that "it would be a *rare lark* to hear him." Having heard that Mr. Collins often took hold of those he warned, he said to his wife, when starting, "If that Collins puts a finger on me, I'll lay him on his back." He went. Mr. Collins did not touch him, but the Word did. He stayed the after-meeting, and came home so changed in manner, that, at a glance, his wife exclaimed, "Why, Tom,—throw Collins! He's thrown thee, I can see." Answering not a word, he walked up to a box, pulled out dice, and cards, and balls, and all the *et cetera* gambling tools, and cast them into the fire straightway. Not long after the man found peace with God at a penitent bench while Mr. Collins was talking to him. From that time he seemed filled with attachment tender and ardent towards the instrument of good. Neither weather nor miles prevented him from hearing the Word from his lips. Every place in the Circuit found him there. He proved to be a genuine Christian, and became very zealous for God.

The supplementing of Sabbath efforts by extemporized old-fashioned services on the morning of the next day, became common. The journal shows it to have been done at St. Leonard's, at Tenterden, and at other places. Of Rye he writes, "I preached there at five o'clock: two mourners were comforted." At the close of a glorious Monday service at Northiam, Mr. Collins announced that they would gather again for early prayer next morning. "Will any this winter weather be such fools as to come?" said one of the auditors, in his heart: "they will not catch me there." Ah, he little knew! He was so scared with dreams and visions of the night, that he gladly left his bed at three o'clock, paced the cold street with weight of trouble on him that made him forget the frost, and was the first, when the door was opened at five o'clock, to enter it. In that meeting the Lord saved him, and he remains to this day a Local Preacher and Leader in the Wesleyan Society.

On week-days Mr. Collins's custom was to set off early to the place where he was appointed to preach. He denounced sin and published Jesus to every pilgrim on the road, visited the village homes, talked to the children, prayed with the families, got tea, and then retired, if

weather permitted and locality favoured, to some neighbouring wood,—if not to some trusted friend's chamber,—in order that he might wrestle with God. From such exercises he loved to go, saying as little as possible to any, straight into the pulpit. Many have been melted under his utterance of the first hymn. On week-day, as on Sabbath, he seemed unable to leave the seed sown by the preaching, until it had been harrowed in by the effect of the prayer-meeting. That meeting generally commenced by his rich, deep, mighty voice striking off,

Jesus, the Name high over all  
In hell, or earth, or sky.

Oft, as he sang, he would walk down the aisle, scanning the congregation. Nor was it easy for any whose hearts the Lord had touched to conceal their trouble from his practised eye. All such, when discerned, were kindly invited to gather around the communion-rail, where the Pastor directed them, loving Christians pleaded for them, and in multitudes of cases God saved them.

Mr. Collins kept unannounced, but regular, days of fasting. A correspondent who knew him at that time says: "He was very self-denying. People often noticed how at table, silently and without ostentation, he passed by delicacies, and chose the plainest fare. He was exemplary in almsgiving. Having but little, he did diligently of that little." His stipend was of the very lowest. He had to write home, "I long to see you, but could not come without borrowing; and *debt would cut my tongue out.*" He had to say, "I want new clothes, and am pining for books:" yet, with all this, pinched families and sick sufferers found mysterious shillings and half-crowns under tablecloths, and the like, after his departure.

Devotion was the secret of his power. A farmer said to me of him, "Before he sowed the seed, he always took care to steep it well." One writes:—"Our house was his occasional home. A man so prayerful I never knew. Once hearing, about two A.M., a gentle tap at my bedroom window, I looked out, and, to my surprise, saw Mr. Collins. He asked me to slip quietly down, and let him in. I did, and inquired, much wondering, "How have you been so delayed?" "O," said he, "I had busi-

ness to settle with my Father upon the road.' It turned out that, communing with God in a wood,—his oft-chosen closet,—hours had passed unregistered, and time been forgotten."

We have it under Mr. Collins's hand, "I expect salvation every sermon." Few were the cases in which he did not ask the people to remain to pray. For himself, he loved to stay until the jubilant shout of sin forgiven and doubt dispelled arose. He occasionally records, with evident sadness, "Good feeling, but *no specific work done*." It seemed to him like retreat to go from the field without spoil. His joy was victory won upon the spot. To achieve this, sometimes his pleadings became agony, and his meetings were long, but God 'caused him to triumph in every place.'

None could expect to run a course so special smoothly. A storm of persecution soon rattled round. He writes:—

"June 28th, 1833.—We opened the new chapel at Brede. Such a concourse was scarcely ever seen in Sussex. A great booth had been erected, and both booth and chapel were filled. The collections were large—but, better still—twenty souls were gathered in. We have begun a school, and already have a hundred scholars. The whole parish is in a ferment. All manner of things are invented concerning me; but having read Ezek. vi. 11, and Luke vi. 22, I heed them not."

About that time, a commercial traveller told Mr. Collins's father, "Sir, your son has become a man of fame. He is setting Kent on fire. I heard of him repeatedly, and saw foolish rhymes about him in the barbers' shops. The devil hates, sinners fear, and true hearts love him."

As of old, opposition often turned out for the furtherance of the Gospel. A poor fellow, at Northiam, distressed that his wife should go where, if tales were true, such abominable things were done, threatened, if she persisted, that he would commit suicide. A second and a wiser thought came, "Go and see for yourself what they really do." He went; the word cut him so keenly that he could not restrain his tears. A circle kindly gathered round him for prayer. His wife knelt by his



side ; and Mr. Collins writes, " O ! it was a noble sight to see their mutual joy when his soul was set free."

Carlos Coleman informs me that the " baser sort " often gathered rudely round the chapel doors, and saluted this evangelist of their villages with odious epithets. Into the very centre of many such a crowd did Mr. Collins walk manfully ; never debating, but in few words announcing his Master's love, he would bid them " Kneel down." Many, awed by his tender authority, seemed to be upon their knees ere they were aware. The effect of these pointed, touching, chapel-door prayers was almost magical. Scoffers ran, but left of their band wounded mourners behind ; who, entering the sanctuary, cast in their lot with God's people, and bid their bad companions and bad ways a solemn and lasting farewell.

This novel ministration drawing after it to every place in the Circuit a trail of fire, in the shape of vehement praying men, could not but cause anxiety to some cautious, and offence to some devout and extremely order-loving, souls. It was not Mr. Collins's wont, as some revivalists do, to denounce all such as cold-hearted. He says, " At Tanhouse I found a number of pious aged persons, unable to endure the fervours common among our new-born converts. I therefore, after preaching, committed the conduct of the prayer-meeting to the Leader, a sober, discreet, excellent Christian, inviting the anxious to follow me to the parlour of a neighbouring house. Seven came. God's work was well done there, while the good quiet people helped us, and got sweetly blessed themselves, in offering calm prayers, after their manner, in our behalf."

The journals furnish many instances of peripatetic evangelism. One Sabbath, meeting a lad with a basket of groceries upon his arm, it did not seem right to him to leave that untaught youth to disregard the holy day without an effort to instruct him. " My boy, do you know anything of the great God ? " " No. " " What ! " not know anything of the Lord, who made heaven, and earth, and you, and all things ? " " No. " " Has father never told you of God Almighty ? Has mother never taught you to pray ? " " No. " Much moved by this instance of that terribly frequent crass ignorance of our

cottier families, which is at once a shame and a peril to the land, he began to put before him, simply as he could, those foundation truths which make the substance of our creeds and catechisms. To that untutored mind, everything had the charm and power of novelty ; and as the lad trotted by his side, wonder and weeping alternated. Who can tell? That wayside seed may be waving in harvest fruit somewhere now.

On another occasion, hearing hammerstrokes upon the Lord's day, he just went round the house to whence the sound proceeded, and found there, at the back, an old man mending a cart. To his rebuke, the old man, in excuse, pleaded ignorance : " He was no scholar." The plea was immediately adopted as a text from which God's-goodness was magnified for giving those weekly returning hours of separated, sacred time, in which, from fit instructors in open sanctuaries, poor toiling men might all be taught.

Were every Christian thus faithful in admonishing, ignorance would soon vanish and sin be ashamed. We might not expel sin out of the world ; but if all professors, like policemen, were " on duty," they would soon drive it from the streets. Vice would feel itself a felon, and skulk and hide. The Church's timorousness makes evil brazen, and lets it dare to flaunt itself before the sun.

Conversions on the road became frequent. Returning from Cranbrook, Mr. Collins was overtaken by a person of sober, steady look ; brief intercourse discovered the man to be of thoughtful, serious mind,—wishful for good, but uninstructed in the simplicities of the Gospel offer. Telling him, as they journeyed, the story of Philip and the Eunuch, he assured him that there and then, like the Eunuch, he might believe on the Son of God and be saved. Opening up to him at length the saving plan, he plied him with the duty of present submission to the evangelical conditions, and earnestly appealed to him at once to put his trust in the Saviour. Nor was this exhortation vain. Before they reached the village towards which they went, the man was rejoicing in the bliss of accepted salvation.

Another day Mr. Collins met a person of the name of Morgan on the road to Mountfield. To godly converse

the man gave earnest heed. As they walked, attention deepened into desire; desire intensified to distress; to the distressed soul the Gospel was explained, and with prayer pressed home; and there, in that rural lane, willingly as if it had been a cathedral, God sealed His Word, and sent the villager to his cot, filled with unspeakable joy, ever to look back upon that as the birth-hour of a new life.

It would be wrong to leave Mr. Collins's profitable parlour work unillustrated. Records such as the following are in the Journal at once very sweet and very common:—"At Mrs. Smith's, of Brede, one of the servants was saved at family prayer." "At Peasmarsch, at tea, at Brother Filmer's, a youth was filled with joy unspeakable." "On Saturday evening, at Salehurst Abbey, the neighbours gathered in; I talked to them awhile; we then fell to prayer, and five of them were saved." "We had tea last evening at Miss Apps's. Two girls found peace. Miss Hilders, Mr. W Apps, and Oliver, with several others, were there. Next Friday, in the same way, Miss Dawes will gather a few friends. Carefully managed, good will come of it." Susannah Hodges writes:—"Mr. Collins met me at Mr. Francis's house. I had been a self-righteous Pharisee; but, in the morning service, the Spirit had opened the eyes of my soul to see its own vileness. Mr. Collins asked, 'Do you expect salvation to-night?' I replied, 'Whatever good I may have, it is my resolve not to go away without it.' He said, 'I have pleaded with God this day for hours, in the wood, for souls: He will give them. I know His sign. I shall have souls to-night. Yours, I trust, will, be one.' Well, night came, and with it such a power as I had never felt. Cries for mercy rang all over the chapel. Before the sermon was done, I, with many others, fell upon my knees to implore salvation. I found it; and to all eternity shall bless God for that Easter Monday."

This good Pastor was very diligent in visitation of the sick. He says:—"I went to see a sick man. Knowing his case, I faithfully brought up his sins before him. He was offended, and cried angrily, 'Don't set yourself up to judge me.' Under the prayer, however, the Spirit's

touch on his conscience mastered him. His pride broke down thoroughly. His humble confessions, made amid the tears of his weeping family, I shall never forget."

Ann Boots, a well-informed, moral person, when about forty years of age, was taken ill; though a regular attendant at ordinances, she had yet deferred decision for God. With her, as with thousands similarly situated, the devil's "Time enough yet" at once changed into "Too late now." In this snare her soul lay bound. After conversing with her of almighty, unfailing, ever-ready love, to use Mr. Collins's own words, "he *wrestled* in prayer." Consolation came. He left her crying, "I will trust Him! I will trust Him!"

On another occasion it is written:—"I went to see poor Tommy Curd. His prayers have brought me many a blessing. He has been much tried. I found him sinking in decline, and brought by Satan's buffetings into extreme darkness. As we talked, however, the cloud lifted. Tommy, to my surprise, suddenly rose in his bed, and, as if the devil had been visibly present, with clenched fists and determined air, hurled defiance at him; then, as in a rapture, shouted, 'Glory be to God! Glory be to God! Glory be to God!' with the strength of a giant. I could only say, 'Amen.' How was I humbled in sight of that blessed ecstasy! I offered all my soul to God afresh, and came away rejoicing."

Outcasts were not forgotten. Sarah W—— had fallen into shame. All her friends despised her. Having been once a Sunday Scholar, Mr. Collins turned aside to Goudhurst workhouse to speak with her. He says:—"While I showed to her her sin, she wept. My very soul pitied her. Never, as then, had I seen the beauty of the love of Jesus to the lost. O, in face of that purity stooping so low, why are we, sinners, so swift to forsake? so merciless to condemn? Lord, replenish me with perfect love! Some Christian women, encouraged by my going first, will now visit, and, I trust, rescue to ways of virtue this wanderer from the fold."

Soon I find him again seeking a soul-jewel sunk down in mire still deeper; a poor waif of the street, rotting with disease. Seduced, cast off, degraded, she had run a fearful course, and run it fast. The poor wretch could

scarcely speak through her gangrened throat. He says :—" I sat over her bed with a broken heart, preached to her, with tears, the mighty Saviour, and came away, not without hope that, at the last, this fallen one too should be found enfolded in the loving arms of Christ."

Such as had "erred" from the faith were not overlooked :—" I conversed with Henry E——, a Socinian. As he professed to take Scripture as his guide, I replied, ' So do I ; therefore, to it at once we will go ; and I challenge you to cite any text which I, with my creed, will not accept just as it stands ; further, I pledge myself to find many which, if yours is to be held, must be rejected, altered, or manifestly quibbled about.' " That Biblical appeal was safe ; the process short ; the issue argumentatively satisfactory. The objector's battery was silenced ; but I do not learn that his creed was changed.

The Lord's Word was mighty among the worst. At a lovefeast at Robertsbridge many bore witness of the Saviour's glorious power. One had been a poacher ; another, a gambler ; a third, a drunkard ; and, last of all, one described himself as having " well deserved hanging." Considering the classes from which many of the converts came, their stability was remarkable ; yet there, as elsewhere, occasionally the Minister's heart was riven by instances of backsliding. He tells of finding " poor J. H—— drunk upon the road ; " and remarks :—" Hop-picking had led him into old scenes, and among old associates. It is very perilous for unstable men to go upon ground where they have often fallen. I wept at the miserable sight. There he lay, under a hedge, without a hat, filthy, degraded, mastered by the devil, all unconscious of his shame. O, may he yet return ! "

Of God's just dealings with such, I find many monitory instances recorded :—" Not long since, an old backslider stumbled drunk into the Rother and was drowned. A few days ago another fell from the top of a load, and died on the spot. Providence speaks in warning yet again. E. C., who for a time ran well, at length lost fire, grew careless, absented himself from means, fell into open sin. We saw him no more ; but, last week, sad to tell, crossing his father's floor, he suddenly dropped,

and without one word of prayer, or penitence, or hope, expired."

The revival had happy social influence. Two families at Brede had been in feud about a well. Their houses belonged to different landlords, between whom understanding existed that the well on the one property should be common for the use of both. The tenant within whose holding the water was, refused admittance to it. Proceedings in the Court to test the right were about to be initiated; when, lo, the heads of both families were someway drawn to chapel, and both converted. Gospel precluded law. The quarrel terminated; and the reconciled families learned to love, esteem, and help each other.

Circumstances awaking public interest were employed for evangelical uses. The case of William Goodsell, a poor wretch brought at once to man's justice and to God's mercy, as dealt with by Mr. Collins, was productive of good to hundreds. The unfortunate convict was the son of parents miserably ignorant, miserably wicked, and miserably at variance with each other. Their squalid cot was a place for clandestine, unlicensed sale of beer; a den of the worst description, the resort of the very vilest company. Mr. Dawes, a respectable farmer, moved the authorities to rid the neighbourhood of the nuisance; and on the evening of November 22nd, 1833, William Goodsell, in revenge, set fire to that gentleman's barn. Much corn was destroyed; and, in the glow of the flame, bystanders were horrified to see, without possibility of reaching or helping, four bullocks on their knees backing with all their might from their chains. The fastenings were too strong to be broken; and the poor creatures died in terrible agonies in sight of all the people. The culprit was suspected, arrested, convicted; and, eventually,—as the manner then was,—hanged for the crime. Some of his uncles, God-fearing men, prayed for him, visited him, and led him to the Saviour. His penitential grief was deep, and the mercy of God shown to him manifest. A very suitable prayer, invoking pardon for Christ's sake, had been written out for him. It was found after his death among his papers, with this addition in his own scrawly hand:—"This prayer is my

most earnest request, which *I be* in good hopes has reached the heavens and my blessed Saviour."

The man left messages for many, such as these:—"Entreat mother to give up selling beer." "Beg John to leave off cards." "Tell Frederic to be warned by me, and shun evil company as he would a lion coming to devour him."

To make public the monitions, praise God for the mercies, and apply the lessons of this incendiary's fatal end, Mr. Collins preached a sermon at Staple-cross. To chapel-goers in that place the unfortunate youth had often been a rude annoyance. Crowds of people, who never ordinarily attended worship, came. When the doors of the chapel were opened, those nearest rushed through them, but far more were left outside than could anywhere squeeze within the walls. Seeing this, though the day was wet, Mr. Collins at once made up his mind to preach out of doors. A great cask was found, and set against a row of houses. It must have provoked a smile to see the thankful joy with which Eldridge, the huge pugilist, whose conversion we not long since narrated, lifted, as if he were but a child, the not light evangelist to the top of the tub; and then stood tenderly shielding him from the rain with an umbrella. The front rooms of the houses were filled; but, so intense was the interest, that, wet as it was, not one of the unsheltered multitude before the preacher stirred. That service closed for ever some holes of iniquity which had been the curse of the parish, won some profligates to the Lord, and impressed with awe many who until then had despised every religious thing.

Mr. Collins's preaching was often attended by Divine unction almost resistless. Large congregations bowed beneath its influence as trees in a wood before a mighty wind. An auditor remarks, "While discoursing at Northiam, from Isaiah xliii. 25, 26, feeling grew until the people instinctively rose from their seats. During the final appeal preaching merged into praying; all seemed carried to the throne; the chapel resounded with loud amens. Many were saved, and more abundantly comforted."

Success was not limited to trophies won at penitent

benches. A good woman informs me that her husband, finding the chapel lit up late one evening, walked in. The flour-covered garb of his trade made the man very conspicuous, as he stood curiously and undevotionally gazing in wonder at the scene. "Lord have mercy on that baker!" cried Mr. Collins. The man started like a frightened deer; but the arrow was in him. "Lord have mercy on that baker!" kept ringing in his ears until he made the prayer his own. "It was answered then; and a few weeks after, happy in God, he joined the Society from whose sanctuary doors in such scared confusion he had fled.

Many found the salvation of the Lord at home, others at work. Peniel might have become the name of fields, and woods, and roads; for there men saw the face of God. One, who is now venerable alike in character and in years, went forth with sad heart to his labour; as he wrought and thought, it pleased the Father "to reveal His Son" unto him. The hop-pole work of a week was before the man. That strange light which brought heaven into his soul made him so glad and strong that, he says, "I felt as if I could have stacked the lot in half a day."

During Mr. Collins's ministerial term at Sandhurst, emigration was in full flow. That movement bore many of his converts to distant shores. Stephen Gardiner went to Australia, settled up the country, built a chapel pretty much with his own hands, and then preached in it to the edification of many. John Boots is this day a useful Local Preacher in the same part of the world. Spencer Shoesmith went to the United States, entered the ministry, and has told many a story of the Kentish revival in American camp-meetings.

One other case is too rich in spiritual interest to be withheld. In the village of N—— resided a farmer, whose wife feared God and was much attached to Methodist preaching of the Word. As often as possible she induced her husband to attend the chapel; but was still more delighted when she could obtain his sanction to make his house, for the night, the home of the minister. With them Mr. Collins went. He writes:—"I soon discovered my host to be too fond of gin. In



the name of my God I struck. The reproof got hold. He confessed his sin, wept much, and begged of me to pray for him." Alas! this penitent mood was but a passing one: he was soon snared by the dram and the bottle again. Time rolled away in strange alternations between fits of sorrow and fits of drunkenness. As sin reigned, dislike of him who made conscience vocal, increased. Mr. Collins was appointed to preach and conduct a lovefeast in the village where the lady's father resided. To the preaching the farmer accompanied his wife, which being ended, at her request he returned to her father's house to await there her coming from the lovefeast. That proved to be a special season; she lost all note of time, and a late hour arrived ere the meeting closed. The lady, after charging a friend to secure the preacher as her guest, turned towards her father's to seek her husband. Weary of the delay, he had sallied forth to fetch her; and she met him in anything but an amiable temper. The journey was too short to allay the storm. The first sight within his own door was the preacher's hat. Annoyed to learn that this disturber of his peace had already retired to repose under his roof, he struck the hat across the hall, and with difficulty was restrained from arousing and expelling Mr. Collins from the premises forthwith. Night gave space for reflection. The farmer was up betimes and off, that he might not encounter the man whom he both hated and feared. His enmity increased and extended until Methodists in general were included in it. To such a pitch of madness did it rise, that at length he told his wife, if she persisted in sitting under Wesleyan ministry, they must separate. Seeing that an intimation which she well knew he would never carry out failed to alarm, he said at last, "Every time you go to the chapel I will go to the inn." Her response was, "Husband, whatever you do, I must save my soul." He gave himself to intoxication, she gave herself to prayer. God took the man in hand. Affliction smote him and scared him. On recovery he again appeared at chapel; but Mr. Collins writes, "He made off before I could speak to him. He is, I hear, very miserable. Deepen the wound, my God." Unstable still, his life seemed an oscillation between penitence and

intemperance. Holding on the even tenor of her way, his loving wife pleaded incessantly for the inatuated man. God looked upon her trouble, and in a wonderful manner answered her believing prayer. The husband one night came home from his carousals deeply in liquor. With difficulty he was assisted to bed. It was expected that the dulled brain would soon be wrapped in sleep : instead of that all in the house were in a short time alarmed by a wail of distress proceeding from his room. As his wife entered, he seemed perfectly sober, but cried, "O Anna, Anna ! I am dropping into hell !" His family, all of whom, with most of the servants, had been recently saved, gathered round him. In half an hour, from the time when that cry startled them, the room was resounding with shouts of praise. Henceforth through life the man walked in sobriety and godliness, thanking God for the salvation given on that memorable night.

The subsequent attachment of that gentleman to Mr. Collins was as ardent as his previous antipathy had been intense. Hospitality, without grudging, was free to all who preached the Gospel ; but Mr. Collins's company was sought with special earnestness, and welcomed with peculiar pleasure.

About this time, at the request of a former much-beloved Minister of Sandhurst, with hope of benefit for his flock, he exchanged pulpits for a month. This took him to what he calls, "cold and stony Hertford." Finding few in the chapel, he resorted to the streets. There gibes were not lacking. Some coadjutor, commencing service for him, announced, to guide his setter of tunes, "Common Metre." A feeble and inharmonious choir responded, which hearing, some wag of the street raised cheap laughter against them by declaring, "Ay, it is, *common* enough !" As jokes did not drive this disturbing Methodist, his haters thought that there might be virtue in turf ; great tufts were plentifully flung, but so wildly that not one hit its mark, though it much taxed Mr. Collins's gravity to observe one fit itself exceedingly well into the wide open mouth of a raving fellow, who for some time had been roaring ribaldry into the preacher's ear. The blow probably shook his teeth, and certainly silenced his tongue. A battery of rotten eggs was next

tried, with some damaging effect on broad-cloth. But certain rough navvies who were there, getting defiled by a stray missile of that odious kind, took offence, and threw brick-ends and pebble-stones at the persecutors so lustily that they were glad to seek for safety in immediate flight. Thus, after all, by aid of these irregular auxiliaries, the evangelist was left victor on the field, and the service ended in peace.

In his return journey, passing through London, Mr. Collins called upon the venerable Henry Moore. He writes :—"How affable he was ! I had not—from things I had heard—expected this. My office was my only introduction. I called as a young Methodist preacher. He expressed great pleasure in seeing and conversing with me. His frame of mind seemed deeply devotional. 'Eighty-two years,' he said, 'I have lived ; and my life has been given to God. I have but few more days ; to Him—who is mine through Christ—I will give them all.' The old man's words affected me to tears. I knelt down, and he gave me his blessing. After that interview I went on to the Institution, where Mr. Entwistle received me most courteously. Very pleasant he was ; full of tales of old times and of old men."

It will be suitable here to explain how terminated the early unfulfilled resolve of service in the work abroad. At Sandhurst, Mr. Collins received a summons to join a strong party then going forth to reinforce the West Indian Mission. Against this arrangement his Superintendent, an experienced Missionary returned from that very field, firmly set himself. He declared—and his assurance was confirmed by medical testimony—that, to such a constitution, the West Indies, or, in fact, any tropical climate, would be soon and surely fatal.

This compelled Mr. Collins to pause and reconsider the whole question. Though still perfectly certain that the spirit which had originally prompted missionary offer had been acceptable to God, it yet did seem that the door so long closed against it, and the newly discerned physical objection to his entrance into it when opened, suggested grave doubts whether Providence endorsed the judgment upon which that offer had been based.

He had chosen Mission work as the altar of completest

sacrifice ; the Divine ordering which had driven him to home labour had, at the same time, called for, and received, a consecration not surpassed by any of the toilers in the foreign field. His eye, being single, was full of light. In his mind the inquiry could be conducted without any cloud of fear that retractation arose from shirking of peril, or soft desire of self-indulgence. Such things were not in him, and he knew it.

There is undeniably a clear distinction between gifts fitting a man remarkably to be a quickener of slumbrous churches, and those which specially designate one adapted to be the pioneer of a faith. Revivalist, rather than missionary, endowment had descended, and that in no ordinary measure, upon Mr. Collins. The signal blessing vouchsafed to him in British work uttered in his soul a call, unheard before, to remain where so sealed, unless removal became imperative, and the duty of it plain. His friends, who were conversant with all the facts, unanimously pressed it upon him as their conviction that his true sphere of usefulness would be found at home.

Writing to his father, he says :—" Conference will, I doubt not, be led aright. So strong is my confidence in that, that if it command me abroad, I will at once accept it as the voice of God, and without one misgiving go. At the same time, my faith, with my present light, is neither that it will, nor that I ought. I live, however, in no careful suspense. The Lord reigneth. I take all things to Him, and leave them all with Him. He will so rule that everything shall issue in His glory, which is all my desire."

One work the Circuit needed, for which Mr. Collins felt conscious of incompetency. " We have," he says, " many promising young women. They want leading up. Set on, and set right, they would be exceedingly useful."

In regard to the sex, Mr. Collins, from youth up, with fine instinctive propriety mingled kindness that won confidence, with courtesy that forbade familiarity. Writing to his father, he says, " I want for them a female friend. Annette must come. I have arranged for her expenses. Tell her to come full of Divine power. She will have

many visits to pay, many prayers to offer, and much work to do."

She came: did deaconess' work right well, and gave an impetus to female piety in that Circuit, for which she is rewarded by many tender friendships which endure to this day.

It was upon this station that Mr. Collins met with, admired, and won the affections of his late most excellent and exemplary wife. Stories, foolish and untrue, of her patrician relationships somehow got disseminated by the newspapers at the time of her marriage. She was of highly respectable, and indeed affluent, connexions; educated and accomplished. Her childhood under maternal care had been trained to ethic propriety, perfect so far as an instructor of "the whole duty of man" school could carry it. Providence early supplied the necessary supplement of this mere moralism by the ministry of the Revs. Gerard Noel and Dr. Dealtry, under whose evangelical preaching she felt strong drawings to the Saviour.

Her eldest brother furnishes reminiscences, of which the following is the sum. In the bright days of youth, when everything, in her condition and circumstances combined to make the world attractive, she set herself with her whole heart to turn unto the Lord. When her brother was afterwards similarly moved, her prayers and words of instruction greatly helped him. He told her of the stress temptation laid upon him. "Suppose," she answered, "that you were seeking to cross a river, would slothful yielding to its strong current land you at the point you wish upon the opposite bank? No. You must fix your eye steadily, determinately, constantly, upon that point; and with the point in view strike your oars, and bend your energies to gain it. Would you come unto Jesus? Fix, then, your eye of faith upon Him. Aim at Him; and He will let no current of nature, no wind of temptation prevail to keep you away; across them all, in spite of them all, drawn by Him, you shall reach Him whom your soul desireth."

Faith in Christ led her to zealous work. On a beech-tree, in the village path, in the vicinity of her brother's residence, she cut the words: "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers

into His harvest." Many years have passed, the inscription is nearly obliterated; but the prayer has been fulfilled, and is fresh in heaven for further answers to-day. By her brother's influence faithful Clergymen, Scripture Readers and other evangelical agencies have multiplied in the neighbourhood. Her own work is not forgotten. Some of her Sunday scholars sleep in Jesus; others yet glorify Him by a Christian life, and speak of her still, in the name by which they knew her, as "dear Miss Emily."

In this, at that time, dark village, Miss Emily found a class of humble, earnest, godly Wesleyans. Their prayers and Christian testimony, and especially the conversation of the Leader,—an intelligent man, a Local Preacher, brought her to acquaintance with the clear strong teaching of Wesley concerning the witness of the Spirit, and the fulness of believers' privileges. From that time she yearned for closer association with the Wesleyan branch of the catholic Church of Christ.

Life through, her heart never narrowed to the limits of a sect. Jesus, the joy of every believer, being her joy, to Him, in all things, she gave the pre-eminence; yet I have it under the hand of her sister, a devoted, useful, excellent member of the Established Church:—"Her attachment to the Wesleyans never wavered. She loved the doctrines which were peculiar to them; she loved those peculiarities of order which enable them to be so missionary in their work and so watchful over the spiritual experience and growth of each individual who joins them; she loved, too, all those wise counsels by which Mr. Wesley endeavoured to keep the people called Methodists in entire separation from the spirit of the world, and in conformity to the lowly, self-denying, spiritual, holy example of their Lord and Master."

These are well-considered and weighty words. Wesleyanism must continue true to its early type, if pure, tender souls like Emily Graham are thus willingly to be ours; not won by arts of the proselyter, which we ineffectually scorn, but drawn by spiritual sympathy.

This gently-nurtured lady, having full consent of her friends, feared not to become affianced to a toiling labourer in the Master's Methodist field. She was rewarded with the love of as true a heart as ever beat.

The thing was of God. After years manifested mutual adaptations of each to other, marking wise providence.

Holiness shows among men all the more amiably when it is thoroughly human. Who is there that delights not in that "touch of Nature which makes all kin?" It has privately pleased me well to find affection fetching down and re-tuning the long-neglected harp. Expect nothing. We shall reproduce none of its strains. It were breach of confidence to publish thoughts of a lover's heart in any other than the chosen lady's private ear;—though, if we did, every sonnet thus inspired would be found worthy of him,—pure and beautiful. We shall, however, as is fitting, be brief, and keep to prose. Writing to his father, he puts impressions in such forms as may be told to all. "She is a Methodist, and has suffered much for the sake of being one; she is of the right sort, all devoted to God; very humble and spiritual, simple and plain." These things drew to her Mr. Collins's choice, and were the qualities which underlaid the happiness of their future years.

So far as from notes and sermon jottings I have been able to recover the subjects of pulpit discourses prepared in Sandhurst, the following, placed in consecutive order, is the summary,

A lamentation over sinners: Psalm cxix. 158. "I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved because they kept not Thy word."—Sighs for revival: Psalm xiv. 7. "O that the salvation of God were come out of Zion!" Amazement at the ignorance of evil doers: Psalm xiv. 4. "Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?"—Speculative hearers reproved: Ezek. xxxiii. 30. "The children of Thy people speak one to another, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord. They hear Thy words, but will not do them."—An awakening appeal: 2 Chron. xxx. 8. "Be not ye stiff-necked, but yield yourselves to the Lord."—The self-injury of opposers: Luke vii. 30. They "rejected the counsel of God against themselves."—The doom of the lost: Psalm ix. 17. "The wicked shall be turned into hell."—Encouragement for the penitent: Psalm li. 17. "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."—The Friend of sinners: Luke

vii. 34. "Behold a Friend of publicans and sinners."—The Bearer of our griefs: Isa. liii. 4. "Surely He hath carried our sorrows."—The Pardoner of sin: Isa. xliii. 25. "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."—The record of God: 1 John v. 11. "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."—The gladness of the newly-saved soul: Acts viii. 39. "He went on his way rejoicing."—A caution for young disciples: Romans xi. 20. "Be not high-minded, but fear."—The Christian man's commission: Luke xxii. 32. "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."—The way to be soul-winners: Matt. iv. 19. "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."—Evangelical workers encouraged: John xiv. 12. "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also."—The boldness of the devout: Neh. ii. 4. "So I prayed to God, and said to the king."—The benefit of trial: James v. 11. "We count them happy which endure."—The glorious name of God: Exod. xxxiv. 5. "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."—The confidence of them that know the name of God: Psalm ix. 10. "They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee."—Backsliders entreated to return: Jer. iii. 22. "Return, and I will heal your backslidings."—Believers urged onward: Josh. xviii. 3. "How long are ye slack to go to possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you?"—The privilege of saints: 1 John i. 3. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."—The first recorded example of its enjoyment: Gen. v. 24. "And Enoch walked with God."—The Christians's way into the holiest, manifest: Heb. xi. 20. "By a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh."—Loiterers called to account: Jer. xiii. 27. "Wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be?"

Here are no metaphysical subtleties, no themes suggestive of doubtful questions; no battle-cries of school divinity; no pegs to hang fancies on; no texts selected on account of special fitness for fine sermon-making. All are practical; all could be well dealt with by a man



whose only college had been experience ; all relate to the very life of the soul. To convince sinners, to set forth the Saviour, to bring penitent men to faith, to stir and rouse the Church to effort and to holiness, is the plain intent and drift of the whole.

This *resumé* is inserted as evidence of Mr. Collins's early ministerial directness of aim ; and also not without hope that the scheme so drawn out and presented may furnish valuable suggestion to any of the Lord's workmen, who, conscious of small store of scholarship, will be glad to perceive that there is a plenitude of subjects thoroughly within reach of any called ambassador though young as Timothy, or uncultured as the Galilean fishermen.

The first year's labour in this faithful preaching added one hundred and eighty-four to the Sandhurst membership ; the second, one hundred and sixty-two ; the third, two hundred. He found three hundred and sixty-six, he left nine hundred and twelve. Who can wonder that he wrote : " Since God has given me such a family here, this place has become *home* to me,—the dearest spot on earth ! " Long after he called them " those blessed years at Sandhurst ! "

With revival, as usual, material prosperity came. New chapels were built, and old chapels enlarged ; debts disappeared ; Mission and school collections augmented ; long chronic impecuniosity of Circuit treasuries was cured ; stewards found, with wondering eyes, a balance in hand of £20 upon the quarter. He found the Circuit in debt, with £25 subsidy from the Contingent Fund ; he left it independent, with £75 in the steward's hand.

Over all this Mr. Collins rejoiced ; but, as he says in the Memoir he printed of Mary Apps :—" Greater is our joy when men of prayer unite in holy agony ; when the Spirit descends and the Word penetrates ; when preachers, leaders, classes, and congregations are all anointed ; when cries for mercy arise, soon followed by bursts of praise over pardoned souls ; when parents receive children to their arms, happy in the love of God, or children embrace their parents, converted at the eleventh hour ; when whole families are saved ; when believers press into purity, abide in it, confess it, and adorn the doctrine ; when

new labourers, blessedly qualified, are called into the vineyard ; when entire villages and whole parishes seem moved by the inquiry, ' What must we do ? ' Then have we the highest joy ; and hundreds can testify that all these things have been witnessed in the Sandhurst Circuit."

Mr. Collins's spirit of zeal and enterprise breathed itself into others, until it became characteristic of the Societies. He writes, " There are some rare jewels in this Circuit,—fine fellows ; they know how to lift when I flag. Many, both of the Leaders and of the Local Preachers, are men of flame."

With desire for conversions so widespread, expectation of success so fostered, and workers so well-trained, all ministries within those bounds became harvest-work. Visitors felt themselves to be strangely upborne by hearty prayers, and cheered by speedy manifest success.

Marvellous results come not of nothing. What then were the causes of this unusually triumphant good ? There was a concurrence in grace, in the people, and in the man. We reverently acknowledge, first of all, the plentiful descent of that power by which " God giveth the increase." After that, no doubt, as the Rev. James Harris remarks, " Mr. Collins's appointment was most opportune. He found a people prepared, using his own phrase, " to take fire, hold fire, and spread fire." As to the man, he had diligence, prayerfulness, and dedication, in degrees seldom reached. These characteristics gave him might ; but which of them is there that any forth-going servant of the Lord may not emulate ?

Young disciples will do well to notice his practical regard of—what now-a-days is too much forgotten—the claim of religion upon the body. " Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy *strength*." Observe, I have no wish to set some half-grown, sickly boy killing himself by imitating the restless labours of this firmly-knit young man. " All *thy* strength," saith the Lord ; not all Mr. Collins's. But let lazy, sleep-loving, indulgent Sybarites know that they cannot be followers of Him who bore the cross. As regards the body, the Bible requires that we seek to keep it pure, to keep it healthy, to keep it at work, to keep it under, and to keep it on the altar. In illustration of this unfashionable godly self-discipline, I have gladly set

down how Mr. Collins despised ease for duty, chastened his body by fasting, taxed it by toil, and kept it in control by self-denial.

Among those villages of Kent and Sussex the mind could get little literary filling and little literary culture. Time consumed on the road left brief space for retired study. Sandhurst allowances furnished little money to purchase books, and farmsteads, of that period, few libraries from which to borrow them. Yet, undoubtedly, his mental strength and stature grew. In Christ's University, few Colleges are so famous as that of Experience. Its lessons are gotten not in the lecture-room, but in the laboratory, where, as the manner of craftsmen is, we learn to do by doing. None can deny that, in this Circuit, Mr. Collins was, as surgeons say, in practice,—practice that made him, and showed him to be, mighty to convince, sure as a guide to the cross, and trustworthy as a leader in the way of holiness. He writes :—" I still enjoy, profess, and preach a full salvation, and many press into it."

Walking with God and working for God, his life had unity. He had no desire to be considered a many-sided man. He made no pretensions to that breadth of thought, in praise of which the cant of to-day is so loud. Much of it is broad as the unbounded air, and as thin. The life we are looking upon was directed by a single aim. His early resolve—I have it under his own hand—was, "*The solemn one thing of my life shall be to save souls.*" To that determination he was true. To that he devoted all.

For this, family visits were postponed. He writes :—" I love you, and long to see you ; but, O, my work ! my work ! I cannot leave it. Souls ! souls ! desire for souls swallows me up."

For this, seducing popular calls were rejected. " I receive many invitations for anniversaries, but am refusing them all, because of the anxiety I feel to confirm the numerous young converts in this Circuit.

For this, sight-seeing was neglected. All the diaries of that period furnish record of but one. Nor was that undertaken for himself. He took his sister to Battle Abbey. The narrative of the excursion, after, in a sen-

tence, humorously alluding to doubtful antiquities which the Cicerone eulogizes to visitors there, at once dismisses scene and ruin, and hastens to tell of the Word which he that evening preached in the little town, and of the sinners God saved. I have indeed, heard him tell one other case ; but it shows, even more strongly than the last, the sway of the ruling passion of his heart. After a week-day morning service, with three or four of his fervent friends, he ascended the tower of Tenterden church. When there, they were more taken with the look of the bell-room as a choice oratory for prayer than as an observatory for landscape. Thinking it suitable employment for a consecrated place, they fell to devotion, depending on the thick walls to ensure privacy, forgetting that belfreys are constructed to let sound out. Confused noise coming down from the height of that old tower seemed portentous. What could it mean? It caused some fear and more curiosity among the neighbours. The old sexton, soon remembering to whom he had lent his keys, roused himself, conveyed his heavy flesh, with pantings not a few, up to them, and with much authority, and more ire, broke up the unlicensed conventicle, dismissing, without a benediction, the daring Methodists, in a speech rather to be described as forcible than elegant.

Intense lover of the beautiful I know that Mr. Collins was ; yet so, at that time, did a stronger love absorb him, that, though dwelling in the very garden of England, allusions to scenery in the Journal are almost as rare as in the Wellington despatches : like them, they are bulletins of battle ; registers of march, and struggle, and victory.

This limitation,—call it narrow, call it rigid, call it what you please,—how strong it made him ! Men of “*one thing*” are mighty. What marks they leave ! If the purpose to which they restrict themselves be the noblest and the best, then each who chooses it becomes, what Thomas Collins was, a blessing from heaven among men.

The Rev. Moses Rayner writes :—“ To have had such a colleague I count among my mercies. He was a benediction in my house, a kindler of holy fire in the Circuit, and has left a name which, through all that region, will be fragrant for generations.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ORKNEY.

WHAT brought Methodists at the stormbeaten Orkneys? What need was there for Conference to send labourers into fields tilled by the Assembly? What call had Wesleyans to cross Pentland Frith with Class Meetings and Arminianism?

Answers may be found in a document, dated August 14th, 1833, which reached the Rev. John Knowles, then stationed at Lerwick. After adverting to the great good effected by Methodist efforts in Shetland, it adds, "We rejoice to hear of the islands of the sea thus waiting upon God." But, as meals eaten by others could not feed them, the writers proceed to tell how Orkney pined for similar ministrations. They urge that, though on an ecclesiastical map every island would be found in a parish, and though nominally they had shepherds, yet, as practically those got the care who gave the fleece, the three hundred seafarers of the fishing station, having nothing to offer, found nothing bestowed.

"Come among us," they say. "We fishermen of Stronsay all join,—all are one in this petition." Poor, dependent for existence upon the uncertain harvests of the sea, they could offer no stipend; but added, "We can get a house to preach in; Hugh Hossack, of Hunton, will give bed and board, and all of us will give welcome to any evangelist you send."

"We have no school, no teacher, no guide, no spiritual food, no ordinances. We are entirely neglected. These things being so, it will not surprise you to hear, though it would fill your eyes with tears to see, how the Sabbath is profaned, and the young people go astray."

"O, Sir, do not let us any longer be left in want of all

Gospel helps. Do lay our case before your Society, and either come yourself, or procure that some other faithful servant of the Lord shall come, and break among us also the bread of life."

It could not be in the heart of a Methodist preacher to repel an appeal like this. At his earliest opportunity, which was in June, 1834, the Shetland Minister went over and spent six weeks in Orkney, surveying the field, visiting the people, and preaching wherever he could among the islands.

Only made more hungry by that brief privilege, the same persons, in 1835, forwarded a similar petition to the Shetland District Meeting, and, through that meeting, to the Conference. At the Conference, held that year at Sheffield, it was agreed that the Orkneys should be accepted upon the Minutes, and that two Ministers should be sent.

Mr. Collins's appointment thither stands connected with his original missionary offer, in a way that we will explain. At the Conference of 1834, his demur to the official call to the West Indies came up. It was summarily said, "That young man's zeal is declining." Against that judgment—all mistaken, too hasty, too publicly pronounced—the Rev. George Jackson, then travelling at Hastings, rose to protest. "No! no!" he cried, "we, who are his neighbours, know better than that. The fire is as bright as ever, though it flames upon another altar."

That chivalrous shielding of integrity in the midst of the brotherhood, whose good opinion was, to his friend, more precious than the praise of all the world beside, was never forgotten. Mr. Collins mentioned it to me with warm gratitude years after; and I have reason to believe that because of it the name of George Jackson got permanent place upon his "Throne of Grace" list. The issue that year was a third appointment at Sandhurst.

At the Conference of 1835 the Mission-House authorities renewed their claim. They little liked—who can blame them—allowing so promising a man to slip through their fingers. Mr. Fordred, representative of the Kent District, stated that, as he understood it, the

decision of the previous year was a transfer to the home work. It was answered, "Not so; we only lent him to you for a year." Mr. Rayner, the Sandhurst Superintendent, said, "The information which reached Mr. Collins after last Conference was of an opposite nature. After long waiting—and anxious questioning—in that decision his mind has found rest. To take him now will raise in him doubt and disappointment." To this it was replied:—"Well, if the work for which he offered himself be now distasteful to him, we give him up; we will not have him. But let Moses Rayner tell that young man, 'He that putteth his hand to the plough and looketh back is not worthy of the kingdom.'"

This surrender was too scornfully done, it was ungracious; it was done with the air with which we fling away a weed. Few readers of these pages will believe that many worthier of "the kingdom" were that day extant, even among the heroes of the work on foreign shores.

When Mr. Collins heard of these severe words, he was neither angry nor much surprised. Believing that unacquaintance, not unkindness, had dictated the sharp rebuke, he meekly wrote: "I expected censure. Nor is it wonderful that they, who can neither see into my heart, nor know all my case, should misjudge, or, under the circumstances, think hardly of me."

Shortly after this conversation, the Orkney petition claimed attention of the Conference. A post so cheerless, naturally enough, was refused by many. Dr. Knowles writes: "At length I rose, and said, 'I will go if you will give me Thomas Collins as a colleague.'"

A larger boon than that would not have been denied to a volunteer who, thus willingly, bade farewell to wheaten bread, and set forth to a very fair chance of keeping lent all the year in a climate of which Sir Walter Scott has written, "Come from where you may, you will say that you came from a better." The Ex-President remarked, "We have had question which work should claim Brother Collins. Well, Orkney, is it Home, or is it Foreign? Here is a station affording equal question which work it is; send him." Dr. Beaumont, from intrinsic reasons, liked the suggestion. "I

know him," he said, "robust, earnest, self-denying, believing; he is the very man; the Minutes from A to Z will furnish you no better." Mr. Collins's representative, with due regard to the honour of his client, could scarcely object. A young soldier whose hardihood has been publicly questioned, may not shrink when ordered forward to the breach. The members of Committee who had found Orkney stationing no small difficulty, accepted with joy such a solution. If he would indeed prefer those cold, tempest-torn rocks to the sunny archipelagoes to which they would have sent him, the very Secretaries could not complain. Moreover, with such an issue coming of it, they shrewdly foresaw that none upon their list would be encouraged to play loose with missionary pledges. The proposition was manifestly opportune: it united all parties. While "heads of houses" thus concurred, the timorous brethren, over whom, like a cloud of ill omen, that "*awsome*" appointment had seemed suspended, cried, "Agreed, agreed," most lustily; so down went the name, and on went the Conference.

The station was hard; yet appointment to it could not fairly be construed into a hardship. Some one must go; and, if any good were to be done, some such man. I know no other to whom at that time so many designating fingers pointed. Sending him hushed a discussion, filled right well a place not easy to fill, and met the wishes of a deserving pioneer.

As to Thomas Collins, it was no penalty; it was a Providence; the manifest answer of his own prayer. After the fire of revival, he needed a school of the heart. Orkney—to his great advantage—drew him from the whirl of a premature, noisy, dissipating popularity. It hid him from men, and sent him to God. It trained him to deal with units; it perfected patience; it taught him to work and wait. It cultured self-reliance, exercised him in the management of affairs, and allowed him time to read, and think, and pray.

A Minister's removal from scenes of Gospel triumphs can never be done without a wrench. Mr. Collins says, "I had powerful struggles of mind. Depend upon it, when the time came, I felt it a hard piece of work to



leave Sandhurst. 'Never can I forget the agonies and raptures I have had there. I love that people deeply. Many of them live in the clear light of purity. They confessed it nobly in their lovefeasts, and exemplified it nobly in their homes.'

A removal so long as that from Kent to Orkney was little likely to be appropriately paid for by Stewards of a Circuit financially weak as Sandhurst. The strain was one which—at that time—Mr. Collins's own purse was ill prepared to meet. By various self-denials he saw his way to such expenses of travel as would fall upon him; but how also to pay £2 ros. due to a London bookseller, he could not devise. The kind-hearted wife of his Superintendent—though knowing nothing of his special difficulty—offered to lend him money. This offer was, with thanks, declined. His heart turned to his Heavenly Father. The difficulty came without his fault; he felt that it was a case for trust that it might be removed without his anxiety. Better beg of God than borrow of men. If he borrowed, how—out of Orkney pittances—could he repay! "Borrowing only defers trouble, my Lord can remove it." Thus thinking, away he went to Sandhurst chapel,—a very usual closet of his,—locked himself in for an hour's communing, and laid all his affairs before God. How early an answer came, may be learned from a note written next morning, which thus commences:—"This first sheet of your excellent paper is, as is proper, inscribed to you. When your man came to our house last night, I was but just in from the chapel, where I had been asking assistance of my Heavenly Father. I returned, assured that He would help, though I did not know how, nor expect it so soon. My first petition could scarcely have been uttered ere you were packing your present. When I received it, I went to my knees, and thanked my good Father with tears; and now I thank you."

The gift which came thus opportunely was a large and excellent supply of stationery, accompanied by twenty-five shillings. That amount it had been intended to expend in a writing-case; but as he prayed, a second thought arose in his friend's mind, that, perhaps, at such a time, cash would be more serviceable to him.

The same day, a lady of another church, who, at times, had been severe in her strictures upon the thunder of his exhortations, sent an earnest request that he would call upon her. He did so; and with deep feeling spoke to her of the things of Jesus. At the farewell she slipped a sovereign into his hand, and insisted upon its acceptance.

Five shillings yet were wanting. Mr. Collins remarked to me, "I said no word to any creature, but felt sure my Father would send them."

He was about to mount the coach. That last crown has not come. Will it?

"Mr. Collins," said the Rev. Moses Rayner, "it just occurs to me, that upon the Narrative of William Goodsell, which we jointly published, there is a balance of ten shillings profit: half is righteously yours; here it is."

So with the last mite of the sum in his palm, he mounted the coach, and found in that answer to prayer sweet solace amid the heartbreaking farewells of his friends. He writes:—"As the vehicle rolled on, looking up to heaven, I said, 'Father, Thou art true; Thou art all-sufficient; Thou art mine. Since Thou givest Thyself to me, I will not be cast down because Thou callest me to leave Thy children. Whether I go east, or west, or north, or south, I will be at Thy work. From Thee no change of place can separate me. In Thee have I friendship and wealth. Thou art all I need for time, or through eternity; and since Thou art my portion, in Thee will I be content.'"

Mr. Collins stayed to preach at Sevenoaks; saw sinners converted; thought "that Circuit fine ground for a soul-saving man, the very key of Kent and Sussex." On Wednesday, in London, he breakfasted with the Ex-President, the Rev. Joseph Taylor, who informed him how four Orkney men came, in a boat, a hundred miles, over their rough seas, to fetch a Methodist preacher. That narration touched his heart, and drew him strongly towards those Gospel-hungry isles. He went on to Birmingham; met his mother; heard a tender, memorable sermon from Bumby; joined his colleague in Manchester; went on with him to Edinburgh: saw the son of Tippoo Sahib; admired the magnificent site, and wondered at

the tall houses of the city ; heard a brilliant sermon from Beaumont ; took steamer at Leith ; landed safely at Kirkwall on Saturday ; found a solitary Methodist, an excise-man, taken thither by the duties of his office ; from thence came by boat to Stronsay. From his lodging there he wrote :—" Our quick, safe passage is of God. Not the value of a pin has been lost. I have come six hundred miles, seen all my family and many of my friends, in less time than some have had to wait for a vessel. After all the travel by land and tossing by sea, here we are well, and beginning to work in the name of the Lord."

The land was not attractive. An early Orkney letter says :—" This is a wretchedly sterile place. There is not even the smallest shrub ; nor will they grow if brought. Hundreds of the inhabitants of these isles never saw a tree in their lives. There are a few good houses, but the homes of the poor are miserable huts. You have to bend low to get in at their doors, and are lucky if you do not find the inside such as to make you quickly willing to bend double to get out again. The walls are rough, unplastered stone ; the floors earth ; the space so limited, that you can lie on the bed and warm your hands at the fire ; the fire is of peat ; the room full of smoke ; and, surely, there never was smoke anywhere else of such a hateful odour.

" Amid all their privations, these humble, unassuming people are a contented race. I visited one poor fellow who had neither tasted meat nor possessed a pair of shoes for years. After toiling all through last fishing season, his share of money came to but fifty-four shillings, forty of which must go to the Laird for rent, leaving fourteen with which to supply wife and children until next year, and no prospect of earning more. ' Why, man,' said I, ' yours is but a gloomy outlook. Can you sing ? ' ' O, yes ! ' he replied ; and at the word started off with :—

The Lord is only my support,  
And He that doth me feed :  
How can I then lack anything  
Whereof I stand in need ?

After that man's song I dare not murmur."

Free Kirk zeal had not yet stirred the heart of Scot-

land. In those remote, sea-girt parishes Moderatism, prevailed. The world mastered the Church. Bills of auction sales were announced in Kirk. It was not uncommon for island Clergymen to curse and swear. Communion services had been disgraced by ministerial drunkenness. One disgusting sot, in face of all the people, defiled from the pulpit the head of the Precentor in the desk below. Exemplary pastors were few, and lacked power. The bonds of discipline were relaxed. Evangelical doctrine was wanting. Present faith in Christ was not urged. All talk of being saved here and now was thought to be sheer enthusiasm. Assurance of sin forgiven was neither preached, enjoyed, nor expected. Moralism and orthodoxy satisfied the serious, while fatalism kept asleep the multitude.

Churchmen there were plenty: saved men were few. Almost every family, native to the place, belonged nominally either to Kirk or Secession. These, of course, with their heritage of stiff Calvinism, at first neither wished the presence of Wesleyans, nor came to hear them. Few, poor, and sluggish, the neglected seafarers, who alone had sought Methodist ministrations so imploringly, were but an unpromising charge. Was it worth while to go to this land of rain, and sleet, and storm, for the sake of a handful of fishermen, who could seldom furnish a congregation of more than eighty?

It was a cheering and beautiful fact, that under Mr. Collins's very first public prayer a woman had the long-worn fetters of her spirit broken. That heart set free was Heaven's speedy answer to the question. The Church is paid for any cost where it has won a soul.

Like many beach-dwellers, Orkney people looked upon the wealth of shattered ships as the lawful tariff of their shores. *Flotsam* and *Jetsam* were calculated sources of income. In truth, rentals came down when, much against the will of many, lighthouses were erected upon the perilous promontories of the coast. As Methodism stopped wrecking in Cornwall, so it opposed it in Stronsay. Mr. Collins writes:—"November 16th, 1835. —Last week several of our members, by managing a distressed vessel, saved her from the rocks. I commended them strongly; but the townsfolk think it was

unneighbourly of them to do so, and call them fools for their pains."

Caring nothing for the merchant's loss, looking only on their own things, those islanders were accustomed to desire treasures of castaway freight. Once stranded, the ship was held to be theirs by gift of the waves. Salvage for owners was never thought of. "Catch, who catch can," was the word. Such seizures were not, in island ethics, held criminal. Everybody was at work. The great delineator of Northern manners speaks of "some who canna walk a mile to hear the Minister, but will *hirple* ten if they hear of a ship embayed;" and further represents one in authority at such a scene exhorting the spoilers "to part things fair, and lay by a share for the auld and helpless, which," he devoutly remarked, "*would bring a blessing on the shore, and send them mair wrecks ere winter!*"

About forty persons being found desirous of "fleeing from the wrath to come," they were formed into a Society. At the beginning Mr. Knowles travelled as an Evangelist from island to island, and left Mr. Collins as a Pastor to lead and feed this little flock at Stronsay. Among them Sandhurst sermons would not do: an entirely different class of ideas and experiences had to be met. Mr. Collins says:—"These poor people have already caused me hours of waiting before God. Few of them enjoy any consciousness of pardon; yet I will not fear. Truth is mighty everywhere. The love of Jesus touches hearts everywhere. The blood cleanses everywhere. Faith triumphs everywhere."

The cottages were utterly inadequate for congregational use,—even though the roof for the nonce, was turned into a gallery by anxious men, who mounted the thatch to listen. Preaching in the open air, in latitude 61°, was not often practicable. The little church found its first shelter in a barn. When farm uses required that, they removed to a loft. Through the long winter they found it—as was likely—to be cold, draughty, and dark; yet, writes the Pastor, "the glory occasionally glimmers over us. I get filled, and the people, who scarcely understand the matter yet, amazed."

Mr. Collins's Sabbath soon became, as aforetime, full

of toil. He writes :—" I hold a prayer-meeting at ten ; preach at eleven ; meet the Society at half-past twelve ; preach again at three ; commence the school at five ; close at seven. The children recite texts ; the young men and maidens undergo examination upon a theme allotted for the week's meditation and research upon the previous Lord's day. I find that this method trains them to think, affords me an excellent opportunity for much godly exhortation, and excites such interest that many of the general congregation gather with us to witness and to hear."

This Scotch catechizing, if we could import it into English churches, would be the best thing that ever crossed the Tweed. " Methodist Preachers ;"—the designation suggests our lack, while it expresses our power. People say that " we preach well." If practice can insure that, we certainly ought to do so. The inexorable pulpit demands of Methodism are more numerous than those of any church in Christendom ; but is preaching everything ? " What now ? What would you be but a Methodist Preacher ? " Nothing in all the world. " Why, then, discontented with the title ? If it did for our fathers, will it not do for you ? " Gladly would we be found at last at the feet of the glorious men who earliest bore that name. We deem ourselves no peers of those matchless Evangelists. They laboured harder and better than we do ; yet, after all, not in so many ways. The designation, accurate enough when Methodism was, in its own esteem, but a *Society*, and Itinerancy meant life on a saddle, with a county for a Circuit, wants supplementing now. We should be sorry to let either their work or their title lapse. Both are our heritage. But venerable and honourable as is their appellation, it is neither older nor better than the (ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους) " Pastors and Teachers " of Eph. iv. 11.

The correlative of your Churchship is our Pastorate. None will suppose me likely to rate the value of preaching too low ; yet I say, woe comes of it when a Church can discern nothing in Christ's ambassadors except the glibbest tongues of the brotherhood. They degrade the vocation who see in it no other elevation but that of the rostrum stairs.

Who can tell the area of a room from its length? Give me also its breadth. Thus, by square measure, did John Newton reckon Clergy. "What, in the pulpit? What, out of it?" Minister is a bigger word than Preacher;—utters more ideas;—covers a wider field of duty. Minister,—servant of God! Let none, moved by vain ambition, desire upon himself that label. It is a work-imposing, conscience-quickenng name. Men expect him to be that Trinity in Unity—Evangelist, Pastor, Teacher, welded into one. Heaven help us! "Who is sufficient for these things?"

The lambs will never be fed by a mere sermon mill. Hooker says:—"The delivery of elements should be framed to the slender capacity of beginners." They must be catechized. What is catechizing? Something far higher than mere lesson hearing. The Rubric hits the point in a single phrase:—"The Curate shall *instruct* and examine." He must do in divinity what Socrates did in philosophy. Surrounded by untaught youth, his business is to instruct by questioning knowledge into them, and to examine by questioning knowledge out of them. There is immense informing power in well put leading questions. Judges, juries, and opposing barristers know that; and, as the object of a court is not to instruct a witness, but to examine him, very properly rebuke them. The skilful dealer with children does both; he first instils, and then extracts.

Without Curates and with many churches, we can never do this alone. Nor was it the primitive Christian plan that Presbyters should. The great life-thought of Samuel Jackson will yet bear fruit; Methodism must get its bands of Catechists. Week by week let them work; then, at set seasons, aggregate their catechumens round the Pastor. Beautiful sight! the shepherd in the midst of the lambs! Our noblest sanctuaries would be honoured, our most fastidious congregations interested, our devoutest saints edified, and our best instructed people informed, by a quarterly exercise in nature similar to that which, under favouring circumstances, occurred, as we have seen, weekly at Stronsay. To make room for such a service, a sermon foregone would be amply repaid.

We have in the Creed what we must believe ; in the Lord's Prayer, what we may desire ; in the Decalogue, what we ought to do. These compends supply the teacher with matter to be amplified ; and the taught, with truth condensed : hence they have been, in all ages, the core of every catechetical system.

To these we would add the footsteps of Jesus, as printed in Gospel story ; the planting and principles of the Church, as depicted in Apostolic narrative ; and the special verities entrusted to Wesleyan witness, as set forth in our own formulas.

Catechizing keeps attention awake ; trains the reasoning faculty ; tests attainment ; explains things before ill understood ; methodizes, summarizes, and puts well into the scholars' hands what they know ; and accustoms them to confess, produce, and defend the articles of their faith.

In a congregation so brought up, sermon power has its *maximum* of force ; by them heresy and novelty stand detected ; from its ranks effective workers come.

Early prostration with diarrhœa was the result to Mr. Collins of the great and sudden alteration in climate and diet. He could have borne cold with impunity ; but that air, ever laden with damp, seemed to keep him perpetually doing penance in a wet sheet, and chilled him to the very bones. A traveller, weatherbound one day at a little inn in the Trosachs, asked of an ostler, " Boy, does it always rain here ? " " No, sir, it *snows whiles*," was the cheering reply. Orkney, after October, through its long winter, offers much the same choice. It has very few dry days. It is an everlasting drizzle. Of course, such seasons bring mortal diseases. Typhus and small-pox strike down many of the ill-fed, ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-cleansed inhabitants. Among the small population of Stronsay eight died in a few days.

Island festivals are, by that out-of-the-way people, kept on Old Style dates. On what, according to that obsolete calendar, would be New Year's day, Mr. Collins gathered his little flock to Covenant, Wesleyan fashion, with God. It much surprised him—while on the way to their poor loft—to find almost the whole island turned out to rivalries at football. If some High



Anglicans, to whom the "Book of Sports" is yet a Gospel, had strayed to that Borean latitude, surely they would have thought "these Genevan schismatics are not such *sour Puritans* after all;" for there they were, members of Kirk and Secession alike, kicking away most frantically. The game concluded, Wassail began; song was heard, and toddy went round, and dance kept up till morning.

Wise men are wedded to usefulness, not to methods. Where manners vary, means must vary. In England Mr. Collins had been accustomed to collect in his meetings penitent seekers to one spot, where they might be counselled and prayed for together; but among this shy people little work of that kind could be done in public. Bunyan says:

You see the ways the fisherman doth take,  
To catch the fish: what engines doth he make!  
Behold how he engageth all his wits;  
Also his snares, lines, angles, hooks, and nets;  
Yet fish there be that neither hook, nor line,  
Nor snare, nor net, nor engine, can make thine;  
They must be groped for, and be tickled too,  
Or they will not be catch'd whate'er you do.

Thus warily did this fisher of men behave. Keenly watching every sign of emotion, he followed each individual, in whom he marked it, to talk with them in their quiet homes, or lonely walks. Reserve about spiritual things is a strong wall, by which one man is kept out of another's soul. It would take a thick one to keep Mr. Collins out; but so utterly alien to all their habits was confession of heart exercises, that even when they were saved,—when their eyes were sparkling with joy and love,—their tongues stammered still. They seemed as if they had to learn the dialect of praise. All this, in time, got amended: but in the interim these tongue-shackles sorely tried him. He tells of one who, at home, had with gladness received Jesus; he took her to a class meeting, in hope that her fresh witness would bless others. Alas! no sooner there than the usual Orkney frost fell upon her lips. All his efforts failed to extract a word, much less a song. "What! so much received, and not a breath of thanks! Such silence

will bring a smart." It did. The night was sleepless, and the passing hours a pain, until another gathering occurred, in which she delighted her pastor, honoured her Lord, and set on fire the little company by simple heartiness of praise.

Mr. Collins says: "I plead continually for outpourings of the Holy Ghost. In my approaches to the throne, I often get those refreshing meltings that I delight in. I feel in myself a growing oneness by the Spirit, with the Father, through the Son."

The Rev. James Harris writes: "At Stronsay he gave himself to prayer. As his lodgings furnished no convenience for vocal freedom, he was accustomed to retire to a sheltered cave in the cliff. Though he knew it not, loving people observed his frequent resort thither, and wonderingly found that their pastor often spent successive hours communing with God in that cold closet on the shore. Sometimes a whole day passed in fasting, intercession, and meditation. After one such season, returning home, he met an unconverted hearer. Conscious that a well of power had gushed up in his own soul, he longed that it should flow out upon others. 'Donald,' says he, 'I wish to pray with you.' Though quite unconcerned, the man respected his Minister too much to refuse, and, therefore, led the way to his humble cot. Mighty influence came upon him; and as his Pastor urged the reiterated prayer, 'Lord, break Donald's heart! Lord, break Donald's heart!' the great rough fisherman sobbed for mercy, nor did he get up from that floor until he arose in the conscious joy of a new creature."

The Journal of January 25th, 1836, records: "I went to my lonely retreat among the rocks. Having to form a new class this evening, my heart was broken with desire for conversions. I wept much as I besought the Lord to give me souls. I felt unusual nearness, sweetness of intercourse, and strength of faith; and came away *sure* that my covenant God had engaged Himself to me to make bare His wonder-working arm. Nothing wavering, in that belief I commenced the meeting; and that night Robert Williamson, Lawrence Irwin, and Miss Farquharson were set free."

In the beginning of February, 1836, his colleague joined him at Stronsay. During their first night together, there was more talk than sleep. "Brother," said Mr. Collins, "we must have souls, or I can't stay." Next morning, as they sat over their breakfast of fish, he proposed that they should go down to the shore for what John Smith used to call "knee business." "We went," says Dr. Knowles; "and never shall I forget the power of his prayer. The following Sabbath I preached in the morning; drops of blessing fell. He preached in the evening; and, for the first time in Orkney, sinners cried aloud for salvation." Within a fortnight from that date, forty-two known, clear cases of conversion had occurred. One among the saved in that blessed visitation was Daniel Farquhar, who afterwards entered the ranks of our Ministry, but now sleeps in Jesus.

As aforetime, Mr. Collins, like his Master, sought after the lowliest. A maiden who, by her mistress, was permitted to spend each alternate Sabbath with her parents, was known by him to be in penitential sorrow. He writes:—"As it was her *liberty Sunday*, I just ran down, between the preachings, to her father's house to converse with her." It was a scene of struggle, tears, and agonies; but, poor girl, it proved at length to be "*liberty Sunday*" indeed to her, for her soul was set free. Her father was the first in the movement to bring Wesleyans there. God rewarded him. "Five of his children," says Mr. Collins, "are already saved; and he will not rest till Jesus has them all."

No chance was thrown away: "Robert Henderson came to take an order for slippers: while with me, knowing him to be anxious, I laid God's offers before him; he accepted them, and went away with a spirit at rest."

In an epistle to Kent, dated February 5th, 1836, Mr. Collins says:—

When I read in your acceptable letter that you had not lost one member; that you had added new ones; that your classes were getting more religion; that your praying men still had the power, and lived in the glory; I felt a thrill of joy run through both body and soul such as I could scarcely bear and cannot describe. Glory be to my God for ever!

Go on, my noble fellows. My soul delights in you. I ever did

love you at Northiam, and to all eternity ever shall. I will see you again on earth, if possible ; but if that may not be, will meet you in heaven.

Soul-saving work is next to heaven. Indeed, it gets more of my thoughts than heaven does.

I have been very jealous over you. I have feared lest any of you should decline or desert, and so the good we saw together get depreciated. Tell the young people from me, that with all love I beg of them that they dwell in God, and that they may be teachable and meek.

Orkney is very different from Sandhurst : but God has shown me that He keeps the keys of hearts here as well as there. Your intercessions for me have not been in vain.

On Wednesday last while warming my feet after a cottage service, I observed that a young couple standing by the fire seemed much dejected. I asked, "are you seeking the Lord?" They were. After a few words we went to prayer, and soon their faith was clear, and their bliss was great.

Since conversions have multiplied, no small muttering has been heard in the Samaritan camp. The Kirk Clergyman, assured of his living, is, indeed, easy about matters as an old shoe ; but the Secession Minister, fearing loss if we gain, prattles against us. This finding pardon of sin stumbles him. He compares me to a Popish Priest, and slanderously insinuates that I profess to forgive.

Even here, God is raising up fellow workers for me. Four of the new converts are fine young men, fit for the yoke.

The damps try me. After Sunday exertions I generally feel unwell. Last Monday I had to go to bed quite ill, heated, and expecting fever. We have no doctor here ; so I cried to God, and in the morning rose exulting in strength renewed. God heareth. Still pray for me, dear brethren, and urge others to do so too.

In the beginning of March, 1836, Mr. Collins paid his first visit to the Fair Isle. This involved a sail of fifty miles in an open boat. The sea was very rough, and he was very sick. The place was scarcely Eden-like, as its name. When the wife of Dr. Clarke once pressed a slattern with the aphorism, "Cleanliness is next to godliness," given with much unction, she received for reply, "Thank Heaven, that is not in my Bible!" According to the report of the Rev. James Harris, such grateful people are plentiful in those latitudes. Certain agile parasites of man, found equally with Arab or with Esquimaux, abound. A bed could be got, but sleep not warranted. Charles Lamb describes with rare humour, in his own manner, the onset of such midnight foes, small, lively, and multitudinous. "Luckily," says he, "they could not agree ; for had

their battalions, a thousand strong, pulled all one way, they would have had me on the floor." He might have been in the Fair Isle. Shaking of hands had to be charily done. Diseases, rather irritating than mortal, were annoyingly frequent. Mr. Collins there sought privacy among the rocks for other purposes than to pray; and on his return burned his under clothing in sheer disgust.

It is due to set forth every possible palliation. The people were miserably poor. Purity of skin is not easily kept in over-crowded, smoke filled huts. Even English housewives would fail to make ablutions popular on the rim of the Arctic circle.

At the time of this visit, terrible distress lay heavy on the people of the Isle. The fish had failed on their shores, and the grain perished in their fields. Men grew weak with pining; mothers' breasts were dry; children were dying; the famine was sore. They had sent for aid to Lerwick. The waves ran mountains high. While those great western gales blew, none expected any return: when, lo, over the rough sea, the boat hove in sight. Its crew had defied the storm, that relief for their hunger-bitten friends might not be delayed an hour. Mr. Collins says: "It almost broke my heart to see the overjoyed people kiss the brave fellows who thus, at peril of their lives, had brought such supplies as from her scanty treasures poor Shetland could send."

Though laden with calamity, the islanders were eager for the Word. No minister's face had been seen among them for two years. During the months of that long interval, a faithful few had kept up meetings for godly fellowship. These believers, remembering Christ's "Do this," longed for the sacrament of communion. If any precisian complain because, in such necessity, the Evangelist, not yet ordained, administered:—well, let him. But I gladly record that for sixteen days he went in and out among them; sharing their hardships; carrying joy to their homes; preaching the Word; confirming the brethren; breaking the holy bread; and baptizing the children. By the bye, sorrow in the land failed to check fondness for euphonious names. The

first three on the register are Audiena, Rabina, and Jerome.

Upon reaching home Mr. Collins so bestirred himself that, one way or other, he was enabled immediately to send twenty-eight *bolts* of meal to the famishing people. Not content with that, he proceeded to lay the case in the columns of the "Watchman" before the Wesleyan public. Answers came. One from the Rev. F. A. West, characteristically valuable, deserves notice. Enclosing sixteen pounds of Stockport donation, it says:—

Yours would be a sad position indeed, if while compelled to witness such misery, you were left hopelessly unable to relieve it; but it will be a happy one, if assisted to afford help. Those destitute people can give you nothing again, except—enviable reward!—the silent tear of the eye that blesses you.

Your charge upon those distant, rugged, stormy islands is part of our common family. We cannot deny the obligation of feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked. "Fulness of bread" is with us a national peril. Our superfluities would at once abundantly supply every want of those poor orphans, wretched widows, squalid men, and mothers weeping over tender babes, of whom you tell us.

Continue, then, without fear, to make your appeal on their behalf. A plea for those who so patiently suffer can never fall unheeded upon the ears of godly men.

We of England are debtors to all the world; but specially to fellow-subjects in this realm. It will not enter our minds to shirk the duty, because, happily for us, the sufferers can neither throng our doors, nor appeal to our mere animal sympathies by haggard looks and unclothed limbs: that would be unworthy of us either as Britons, as Christians, or as Methodists.

Difficulties, anxieties and disappointments will arise; yet, go on, my dear brother; the prayers of the Church attend you in your blessed work,—the work for which you live. Trust and be not afraid: never despair; never despond. Now, as of old, "the best of all is, God is with us."

This encouragement of a brother so lonely and so harassed was nobly done. Such fraternity is beautiful. A letter like this would carry a blink of sunshine into an Orkney fog.

Report of such surrounding distress made friends naturally anxious concerning Mr. Collins himself. To allay such alarms he wrote to his father thus.—

Dismiss your fears. Winter was trying. Aches in the joints, something of rheumatism, affected me, brought on by having to stand

so many hours in our very chilly preaching-room. With returning spring these pains, through mercy, have gone. My health is good; and Mr. Knowles declares me looking better than when I came.

As for Orkney fare, it gets little of my thought. Of fish and barley cake Stronsay has plenty; I can take either without repugnance, and, indeed, when hungry, with relish.

This appointment is of the Lord. My theological examinations draw near: Providence kindly brought me hither to prepare. Reflection reveals and recalls to me much ignorance and many indiscretions. Amid the heat and bustle and slavery of work at Sandhurst, I could find little time for consideration. Each error is, however, purged by the blood; and, despite every drawback, I can never recur to those glorious years without hallelujahs. Here Heaven gives me leisure and seclusion. I read more, think more, pray more. My soul grows. Communion becomes inexpressibly sweet. I walk and talk with God; and, so far from regretting, often bless Him for sending me here.

The District Meeting in May made a visit to Aberdeen necessary. To all the brotherhood, but specially to remote and solitary labourers, such annual gatherings are festivals. Mr. Collins preached by appointment, in the chapel at five o'clock in the morning; and, by choice, in the open air at six o'clock in the evening. On the Lord's day he heard the President, the Rev. Richard Reece, and records, "My heart melted under the Word." The book-list given in for the year enables us to know exactly upon what his mind had been feeding. It includes, in Biography, Hess's "Life of Zwingle," Samuel Clark's "Lives of Eminent Christians," the "Life of Mrs. Fletcher," and the "Life of Lady Maxwell." In Systematic Theology, I find the names of Barrow, Burnet, Pearson, and Wesley; in Polemics, Waterland and Sellon; in Experimental Divinity, Mason, Horneck, Shaw, Alleine, Quarles, Rutherford, and Edmondson; in Homiletics, Maclaurin and Saurin; in Exposition, Benson, Sutcliffe, and Watson; in Christian Evidence, Robinson "On the Messianic Prophecies," and Butler's "Analogy;" in Mental Science, Locke; in History, Robertson's "Scotland," Prideaux's "Connections," and Milner's "Church History." Young Methodist Preachers often read not what they would, but what they can get. Omissions of works of pressing importance frequently arise from shallowness of purse, absence from libraries, and lack of guidance; and are misfortunes rather than

faults. Considering where Mr. Collins had been, and what he was, this is a very creditable catalogue. He was a slow and sure, not quick and ready, man. The list is long enough to show industry, and good enough to show sobriety. No censor, at all events, would give the characteristic verdict which Mr. Collins records against a sermon that he heard, "Too much among the toys for me." 'All the books are solid and valuable. That "On the Human Understanding,"—no change of philosophic fashion can make it obsolete. Some since have dropped a deeper plummet than its author, but who ever matched him in clearness?—a thing much needed, much to be applauded, in metaphysical discussion. The man who, through every book and chapter, has honestly reached John Locke's "Finis," is no unworthy graduate in mental discipline. Butler has been justly described as "one to whose profound sayings no thoughtful mind ever yet was introduced for the first time without acknowledging the period an epoch in intellectual history." Private memoranda show the books to have been not merely read up, but analysed, extracted from, and their value estimated. He writes:—"Watson's Exposition is precious; Pearson I read twice; from Saurin I gleaned much: not that I try to soar in his manner, but he has given me improved ideas of reaching and laying open the treasures of a text. Milner is replete with choice spiritual information, but far too much a Calvinist partisan to be trusted as an historian. Nevertheless, reading him has strangely confirmed my own views. Was it likely to be otherwise when I find him obliged to give up Justin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Irenæus, as hopeless Arminians? They were Freewillers: so, without reverence for nearness to Apostolic times, he just sets them down as debasers of Gospel by philosophic mixtures. All his diligence fails to find a Predestinarian, until Augustine of Hippo, in the fifth century; and even he admitted the universal redemption of man." These notes will suffice as examples of his wary, reflective manner of reading.

To that searching question, put by the President, "Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God, and do you earnestly seek to experience the purity of perfect



love?" one who heard it tells me, that the reply, devoutly and frankly given, thrilled the brethren. It was in these terms:—"I am so devoted, and in that enjoyment do daily walk."

The District Meeting heartily recommended him for acceptance in full Connexion by the ensuing Conference.

Of the return journey from Aberdeen the seagoing part was rough, and made Mr. Collins think the shore on which he landed worthy a poetic salutation:—

Welcome, Stronsay, bonny isle,  
 I love to come to thee;  
 May salutes thee with her smile,  
 Which makes thee smile on me.  
  
 When from Southern towns I came,  
 Thy hills, I thought were bare,  
 Thy houses scarcely worth the name,  
 And lean and poor thy fare.  
  
 But, Stronsay, how to love thee now  
 The rolling waves have taught me;  
 And thanks, Great God, to Thee, that Thou  
 To this loved isle hast brought me.  
  
 Since I left thee, thou art grown,  
 Stronsay, lovelier far;  
 Winter's frowns and storms are gone,  
 And gentler is thine air.  
  
 Bright shines the sun through thy long day;  
 Green does the new corn spring;  
 Violets dance on every brae,  
 And laverocks sweetly sing.  
  
 Thy mossy hills, thy shelly shores,  
 Thy rocks, a calm retreat,  
 And all the peace I've found in thee,  
 Sweet isle, I'll ne'er forget.

The joy which thus burst forth in verse, ere evening came, was dashed with sorrow. The ink of his matin song was scarce dry before ill tidings reached his ear and saddened his heart. During the detention of their shepherd by necessity at the District Meeting, and by charity at the Fair Isle, several of his Stronsay flock had gone in evil ways astray. This unexpected stroke made him with sorrow cry unto God. Travel and absence from home had broken the regularity and limited

the hours of his accustomed closet communion. Sabbath work, not to be deferred, found him burdened in spirit and bowed down with grief. He writes: "I preached as I could, but felt feeble, and heavily pressed. Return unto thy rest, O my soul! I must have more of the Divine image, more of the Divine power, and more of the Divine fellowship, if I am successfully to labour here."

A letter, written about this time to a Sussex friend, says:—

Learn your A B C. Perfection transcends elements, but does not forget them. Go on from faith to faith. Dwell in love, then you will dwell in God. So doing, you will have not merely gleams and occasional baptisms of fire; but, walking "in the light as He is in the light," will live in abiding glory. God is with us here, and saves. Blessed thought! God everywhere! with you, with me, with all who, like Enoch, walk with Him. O, keep clear with God! Nothing less than entire devotedness will do. I have been devoted to Him, and mean unceasingly to be so. I send you a few shells. Do not despise them: *They were taken from the King's cabinet.*

On Thursday, June 9th, 1836, Mr. Collins paid his first visit to Skarfskerry. His short stay there began well. He writes:—"I found, on the shore, a secret place, where, from ten o'clock until four, I had a very humbling yet comforting season, and came away in the strength of renewed dedication to God."

The rise of the Skarfskerry Society is a very interesting story. Four years before Mr. Collins went, Donald Brotchie, a Local Preacher of Inverness, coming to visit his brother in that neighbourhood, preached to the people. Under the Word many were so powerfully smitten that they fell to the earth, where, prostrate in prayer, they remained, refusing all comfort, until God's own witness of peace came into their souls. These saved people, at his exhortation, joined themselves together in Christian fellowship. It is a remarkable proof of the power of grace, that a work so commenced, and so left, should prove so abiding. Edward Lyall, a faithful man, one of themselves, became the Leader. Besides meeting them weekly for godly counsel, he gave a lecture every Sunday evening. As the result, Mr. Collins found twenty-four united in membership, and for

the most part walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. The jottings in the Journal are:—

Saturday, June 11th.—Preached, and met one of the classes. The people are hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

Sunday, 12th.—Preached three times, and met the other class. Much comforted in conversing and praying with the members. One penitent was pardoned, two backsliders in heart restored, and the Leader entered into the joy of purity. These were all men. Their stories at home set their wives aflame to share the good.

Monday, 13th.—Several women so stirred up resorted to the preaching-room to seek advice, to join in prayer, and to wish me good-bye. During the interview I sang, "Come to Jesus." They had never heard it before, and it strangely melted them. After conversation I next sang a hymn in praise of Christ, which, in the hours of a sleepless night, I had myself composed.—

God is man in very deed,  
Born to bruise the serpent's head :  
Sing the woman's promised seed,  
And praise the Lamb !

Wake to rapture ancient sires ;  
Prophets, bring your choicest lyres ;  
Join, ye high celestial choirs,  
And praise the Lamb !

Meek and lowly though He came,  
Humbly born in Bethlehem,  
High exalt His wondrous name,  
And praise the Lamb !

See in sad Gethsemane,  
See in tragic Calvary,  
Sinner, see His love to Thee,  
And praise the Lamb !

At these words a poor widow, unable to contain herself longer, leaped from her seat, clapped her hands, and literally danced for joy, crying all the while, "Glory *till* Him ! glory *till* Him ! Hallelujah !" As we finished by singing together of the heavenly meeting where we shall part no more, feeling grew into rapture. My soul was much blessed by the childlike faith and earnest gladness of these simple people.

Tuesday, 14th.—Setting my face again toward Orkney, I crossed Pentland Frith. Landing at the first isle, South Ronaldshay, I walked across it, seven miles ; then passed the ferry, half a mile, to the isle of Burra ;—there heard that just after my boat had gone over in the way to Skarfskerry, another had been upset by a sudden squall, and several of those on board perished. Thanking God for safety, I trudged the breadth of the isle, two miles, to the next arm of the sea, beyond which lies the mainland of Orkney. Having attained thither, and refreshed myself at an inn, with milk,

biscuit, and butter, I toiled on seven miles further to Kirkwall ; which about six o'clock, weary enough, I reached, and gladly rested in the hospitable home of Mr. Walker.

Wednesday, 15th.—After doing a little business relating to our new chapel, thankfully got back to my own Stronsay.

On Friday, June 24th, a huge package, deep with many a bonny layer, hams and tongues, sausages, pork-pies, and such like "*vivers*," came in from Mrs. Austen, a kindly Kentish friend. Think not the dating too particular for such a carnal fact. A few months of Orkney fare would induce any man to mark such arrivals with red letters in his calendar. To the donor Mr. Collins wrote :—

This season of the year is healthy. The coolness of the summer air here suits me better than the heats of Sandhurst did. Many thanks for your maternal care. The contents of your box of blessings were, I assure you, very acceptable. Of cod, haddock, flounder, herring, crab, or lobster, I can take my choice, but meat cannot be got. Providence generally sends need and help together. Your gift, like all my mercies, has been well adjusted ; it was, more than it could be possible for you to suppose, wisely timed. It found me preparing for another visit to the sad and suffering people of the Fair Isle. There, there is such penury of food, that it is difficult to get any either for love or money. Your bounty makes me independent, and enables me to carry stores with me. About fifty pounds were collected by me for those famishing islanders. Alas ! all that it would buy was soon consumed. As the fisheries are this year producing plentifully, the extreme peril of famine will soon be over. I shall take about twenty pounds' worth more of meal with me, a supply which will, I trust help some of the poorest till the new corn comes.

In this promised labour of almsgiving, by which, one of his after letters affirms, lives were preserved ; with many preachings, much prayer, and various success, the little interval until Conference passed busily away.

The Orkney appointment having been of two young men, each entering upon their fourth year, both, according to usage, should at the Conference of 1836 have been received into full connexion. This they desired ; and, that it might be, sought ministerial supply for their work from Shetland, where dwelt their nearest Wesleyan neighbours. Help from thence proving impracticable, as their post might not be deserted, it was mutually agreed that Mr. Knowles should go alone ; thus deferring the formal reception of Mr. Collins until the next

year. This willing abstinence, for the flock of God's sake, from urging his claim to present ecclesiastical recognition was, of course, not held by authorities to be any bar to his entrance at the usual Methodist felicitous date upon the holy estate of matrimony. Accordingly, after the conclusion of Conference, as Mr. Pascall, the newly-appointed man, came down to Orkney, Mr. Collins went up to London.

Notes of travel tell how the steamer from Kirkwall had to cleave her way amid vast, wonderful, shoals of herrings; how dense fog gathered, through which, labouring on, they, unwittingly, were bearing directly down, at twelve knots an hour, upon a perilous bank off Peterhead. Two minutes more and the steamer would have been a wreck; when, opportunely the sun scattered the mist and, with just time to escape it, revealed to the seamen the imminence of their danger. The further voyage from Hull to London, what with vibration from the engine, crowd of passengers, sickness, and perhaps a little pardonable longing for its termination, appears to have been more than commonly uncomfortable.

At London he met his affianced bride, and was received by her relatives with great cordiality. Having, ere the marriage, a few days' interval, he ran down and preached among his old friends. In anxious foresight of that service, he had written: "Pray for me; long travel, and pressure of disturbing things, may cause me to experience inward weakness. I tremble at this idea. The Lord bless me and all the people. Tell all who know the joyful sound to believe for such a day as the sun never shone upon in Northiam yet." When the time arrived, his fears were banished: it was a day of power.

Having been hitherto chary of citing love epistles, I venture to give the final one entire:—

MY DEAREST,

I have only time to beg, most earnestly, that you will spend this day, and to-morrow, in fervent ceaseless prayer.

I am, your own,

THOMAS COLLINS.

The marriage took place at St. John's Church, Hoxton, August 26th, 1836. The diary after the wedding much

resembles the letter before it. This is the record:—  
“My wife and I have entered into this union with much prayer, and in the fear of God.”

Miss Emily Graham had been delicately reared; she knew the labours, privations, and frequent removals, involved by sharing a Wesleyan Minister's life; but, believing herself providentially called thereto, she willingly embraced her duty, and never either shunned, or complained of, any required sacrifice. Her husband's station, the year of marriage, was Wick, upon the tempest-torn coast of Caithness, in the extreme north of Scotland; nor would she, for promotion of her own comfort, allow any change of appointment to be sought. Thither, fearlessly Mrs. Collins went, and bore every hardship with unflinching courage and unmurmuring patience.

The change of residence to Wick needs a word of explanation. To sober Conference Committee men, the Orkney Mission evidently appeared rather romantic than prudent. The feeling which ultimately led to withdrawal had begun to work. It seemed Quixotic for Methodism to take charge of a field covered by organizations of other churches. It was urged,—“But they work it ill.” It was answered,—“Then the shame and blame are theirs.” To the reply, that “on the same principle Anglicans would keep us from their parishes,” it was remarked, “Here we are at home,—we have both a birthright and a vocation; but that *going forth* to pre-occupied fields, whilst so much territory elsewhere lies altogether untilled, is not so defensible a matter. That such work should only be undertaken of our abundance, when we have both men and means to spare. That was far from being the case; for there were few men, and many calls;—calls from localities at once more ignorant, more neglected, more accessible, and more remunerative.”

Who can wonder, that Mr. Knowles, the island pioneer, after hearing such reasonings, wrote back with some twinges of heartache?—“They *permit* Stronsay to be continued, and desire Wick to be cultivated; but *resolve* that the intermediate isles be left to Kirk, Secession, and Co.” When, eventually, Methodism's work in Orkney, flock, and fold, and fruit, was handed over to the Free

Kirk, Mr. Collins, as was natural to one who had toiled so hard to raise it, thought the decision rather thrifty than wise. Perhaps he was right. Hard stations train heroes. The Church may gain a loss that gets rid of them.

On the return journey from London I find Mr. Collins, first, rejoicing at Nottingham, over autograph letters by John Smith; next, gladdening his parents at Manchester by a visit; then preaching to the prisoners in Carlisle Castle, and again, by-and-by, to the neighbours, in the kitchen of Edmond Castle, the seat of T. H. Graham, Esq., his wife's eldest brother; afterwards conducting special services in Edinboro'; and, finally, pleasantly reaching Wick, where the Rev. Joseph Pascall, his newly-allotted colleague, awaited him.

Of Wick, tourists tell that you know by other senses, as well as the eye, when you are there. Certain places are famed for the pungency of their odours: Cologne is reported to have a fine choice; but Wick, the mart for herrings, makes up in strength what it lacks in variety; it is the fishiest of the fishy. Its seamen, a hardy race, daily face the terrors of the deep, and think little of fetching their bread out of the roaring storm. When Mr. Collins went, the population of Wick and Pulteney, united, was about ten thousand. The outlying places of his Circuit on the Scottish mainland, were Skarfskerry, Sarclet, Stanstill, Lybster, and Breacan. In the town, Kirk and Secession had each strong and well-sustained establishments. Most families showed more or less regard for the forms of godliness. Public worship was largely attended. A goodly number were really pious. The chief blot and blight of the place was intemperance. No business could be finished without a dram. Whiskey was the pastor's plague and the people's curse.

The same diary page gives at once information of some early discomforts, and of their removal:—"When we first came, want of retirement caused me to suffer both in mind and heart. In our confined lodgings I could get no privacy, and the severity of the winter forbade my resort to the rocks. I felt this much, and urgently put my case before God. Blessed be the Lord,

He has opened for me the door of the best house for name and site of any in Wick. It is called Mount Sharon; and, though standing alone, is situate in the very centre of the population. We have a good stable for my pony, and a nice garden to walk in; we have excellent out-offices, a good kitchen, a good sitting-room, two good bed-rooms, and, above all, a good study. For premises and furniture, we pay thirty pounds a year."

Mr. Collins took possession, February 13th, 1837, and says:—"I kept thanking God all day long for the house." The very next Friday, before his books could well have found rest on their shelves, he writes:—"This day I have set apart to fast, pray, and renew my covenant with God. I resolve, in the strength of grace, upon a more thorough and prayerful searching of the Scriptures. To the devotional reading of them I intend to dedicate daily half an hour in the morning, half an hour at noon, and half an hour at night."

A letter, dated March 6th, records:—

Several special seasons of fasting have, of late, been blessed to the renewal of my spiritual strength. Prayer breathes more freely, and the Word preached goes forth with power. Crowds come to hear. We keep up three prayer-meetings a week, employ fifteen tract-distributors, and have a Sunday-school of sixty children. Yesterday, (Sunday,) was a good day. God is working. Some wept: but we cannot carry on here in the wholesale way we used to do at Northiam. Methodism here is a new thing. Till the people know me, and I have hold on their hearts, I must be wary. This is a very humbling station. I am learning that the excellency of the power is of God. How helpless I feel in presence of Scotch pride, hardness, formality, reserve and prejudice! I just work on in faith. My mind is made up to stay upon this stony ground yet another year. I cannot leave without my sheaves. God will break through all. God will save souls. It is still true that, "He causeth us to triumph in every place." I love my Master's yoke. It is easy. It is glorious to work for God in bringing poor sinners home. Like Paul, one hardly knows which to choose, this or heaven.

1836 and 1837 were times of terrible distress throughout the North. Highlands, Hebrides, Orkneys, and Shetland were alike involved. Mr. Collins, mentioning some personal gratification foregone, says:—"I had laid aside a five pound note for it, but the poor of this place pull down all my financial plans." Again, de-



scribing his out-door congregations, he writes:—"It is distressing to see the pale, lank visages of the half-starved objects who stand before me. Ill clad, and with not half enough to eat, it is no wonder that typhus rages among the people."

He got his father personally to present an appeal, written by himself, and endorsed by the Revs. R. Wood, D. Walton, and Robert Newton, to some of the wealthy manufacturers of Leeds and Manchester. They generally responded. The Rev. John Mason's business accuracy is a household word in Methodism: kindness of heart, though less widely known, was not less characteristic. The following notes to Mr. Collins so well set forth both features, that it would be wrong to omit them. Benevolent, laconic, direct, they are just like the man.

*March 7th, 1837.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I HAVE procured for your poor people, twenty-two pairs of blankets, forty-three yards of stout flannel, with binding, needles, and thread sufficient to make them up. They are packed in one bale, and directed to you. They will I doubt not, be acceptable.

I am, dear Brother,

Yours truly,

JOHN MASON.

*April 10th, 1837.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I HAVE now in hand £40 for the poor of Orkney, which you may draw for, in whole, or in part, as you judge best.

Praying that the Lord may sustain you and the sufferers by whom you are surrounded.

I am, yours truly,

JOHN MASON.

The charities placed at Mr. Collins's disposal were diligently and wisely used. Nothing was thrown broadcast. Every case was personally inspected. Godly instructions accompanied each gift. To avoid pauperizing the people, and also to extend the area of beneficent action, he required, wherever it was practicable, half the prime cost of the meal, or cloth, or blanket. By his efforts many lives were saved, and many souls were blessed.

Early in 1837, Mr. Collins, wishing for a season to itinerate through the isles, besought his father to leave

his business, come over to Wick, and do there for a while the work of an evangelist. The good man, desiring to make the cost of his visit as light for his son as possible, proposed to attempt a little trade among the managers of the fisheries. The reply was, "Bring no merchandise. The dealers can get it as cheaply as you can. I will keep you; not, however, to sell fishing tackle, but to go fishing for men. You will be obliged here to mind your P's and Q's; and must, for a season, lay aside all bargaining. Among this people Local Preachers are unknown. To them, sermons and selling seem incongruous; and it would be unwise to hinder your usefulness by exciting their prejudice. Get your friends to intercede with God, that you may come full of blessing. We will leave you no time for traffic. Be prepared to preach ten or twelve times a week; to hold many prayer-meetings; to visit many sick; and to live on barley loaves and fishes."

His father came, and the projected Mission tour in the isles was made. Writing to his wife, Mr. Collins says:—"Absence from you is painful; but, that I may win souls, I am obliged to prolong it. I, with you, make the sacrifice for Christ's sake. Keep looking to Jesus. Inwardly feed on Him. Next to Him, I think of thee. Peace be with thee."

I subjoin the father's Journal for a month: it gives a graphic description of Wick work, and is altogether, also, a good picture of that excellent man:—

Wednesday, April 26th, 1837.—This day, by the mercy of God, I arrived in Wick. I preached in the evening to a full congregation, in my son's chapel, from Ps. lxxxiv. 2: "My soul longeth," &c. If ever any man's soul longed, if ever any man's flesh cried out, surely mine did. Protracted absence from pulpit exercises had made me keenly hungry for opportunity. Two women and one man found peace. O that refreshed me.

Thursday, 27th.—I preached again in the same place, from Luke ix. 22: "If Thou canst do anything, have compassion." Bless God many tears flowed, and many hearts were touched; but the crowd was such that it was impossible to gather the penitents together.

Friday, 28th.—Went to Stanstill. Many came. I preached from Luke xix. 10: "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." The feeling was deep. Surely God is preparing a people for Himself.

Saturday, 29th.—Returned to Sarclet. Preached from Gal. ii. 20:

"I live by the faith of the Son of God." Much emotion was manifested.

Sunday, 30th.—At Wick. At half past ten, from John xv. 11: "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain with you, and that your joy might be full." At half-past one, again, from John viii. 31: "If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed." A third time at six from Rev. xxii. 1, 2: "A pure river of water of life." Feeling deepens. Some cannot hold out much longer. The Lord will raise up a people here.

Monday, May 1st.—At eleven o'clock I was called down to speak to two ladies. At my first service on Wednesday their hearts had been stricken; on Thursday, distress sat heavy upon them; yesterday, their trouble became agony; and to-day, with every sign of woe; they declared, "We can no longer live without the pardon of our sins." Things having come to such an issue, the teaching needed to be but short, and the struggle brief, ere their souls entered into liberty.

At night I preached at the water-side. My spirit rejoiced within me to see plentiful proof that the Spirit of conviction fell.

Tuesday, 2nd.—Walked seven miles. The men were busy sowing, but with a few women we held a precious meeting.

Wednesday, 3rd.—Three more anxious inquirers called upon me. How sweet this work of directing souls into the way of peace! At seven o'clock I preached from Matt. v. 14: "If ye forgive," &c. Many stayed the after-meeting. Not a few cried aloud. Several were saved. O my God, save multitudes! I now retire to rest in the name of Jesus. May the Lord protect my soul from evil! Amen.

Thursday, 4th.—O Father, how good Thou art! Thou hast refreshed my body and renewed my soul. All my powers I will use for Thee. Go with me to Lyth. Give me a congregation. Give me a word to them. Give me, and them, Thy Holy spirit. Convert many, and keep through Thy grace such as have believed.

Remember for good my family, whom, for Thy sake, O Lord, I have left. Thine they are, and Thou gavest them me. Into Thy hands, with tender care, do I resign them. Keep them, O Father! May we meet again, cleansed by the blood of the Cross, and filled with the Spirit of grace! May our affections never stoop again to the beggarly things of this world!

O Lord, help me this day, and always, for Christ's sake. Amen.

I preached at Lyth from Jer. xxiii. 29: "Is not My word like a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" "Like a fire," when the spirit is cold and frozen, and the Word thaws it. "Like a fire," when convictions, desires, resolves, all are overlaid and imprisoned by worldliness,—as precious ore is by an earth-clod, —and the Holy Flame gives flux to the imbedding clay, runs it off, and sets the treasure free. "Like a fire," when in the soul, gold and dross, good and evil, mix; and sanctifying grace, like the glow of a furnace, purges and refines. The unawakened heart lives in contented fellowship with sinners, fits in with them, holds hard on to them. It must be struck to be broken off, and wrenched to be got out. While I showed how the Word as a hammer did this, the tears, the sighs, the groans, and the prayers of the people proved the

power of God to be among us. I stayed the troubled ones for conversation. After pointing them to Jesus, I explained the nature and value of our class meetings, and set myself to form one upon the spot. Isabella M'Pherson, Mary Reney, Barbara Ross, and Alexander M'Pherson gladly covenanted to meet with each other weekly. May the handful become a host!

Friday, 5th.—I was this morning lost in admiration of the Divine goodness, and overcome with gratitude, while listening to the narration of God's mercies given to my daughter, my dear son's wife.

Saturday, 6th.—Morning.

How do Thy mercies close me round !  
For ever be Thy name adored ;  
I blush in all things to abound,  
The servant is above his Lord.

O Lord, give me a proper text for Sarclet. Give me clear light upon it. Impart to me Thy mind. Join with me Thy power. Draw out my soul to honour Thee. Let every one that hath an ear hear. Convince deeply of sin. Lead safely to the blood. Pardon freely. Wash thoroughly. Reign triumphantly. All for Thy mercy's sake.

Evening. Bless the Lord ! He has been true. While visiting among the fishermen, Jesus, who of old took such pains with fishermen, assuredly went with me. I found an old woman, who seemed to be nothing but a few bones held together by skin, smoke-dried till it appeared like shrivelled leather. The good news that Jesus loved her, and cared about her, seemed to strike the poor creature with affectionate amaze. Dry and withered as she looked, we had not been long in prayer before her aged eyes became fountains. When I was leaving, grasp and tears and tongue united to assure me how "muckle glad" she felt at my unexpected visit. Many to-day, in the huts of Sarclet, have received instruction and encouragement.

Not since I left England have I experienced such a melting season as this night while preaching from 1 Pet. v. 10 : "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." I was myself almost choked with emotion, and the people were in tears all around me. Three found peace, and have given in their names to be added to those of the little Society.

Sunday, 7th.— Welcome, sweet day of rest.  
That saw the Lord arise,  
Welcome to this reviving breast  
And these rejoicing eyes.

I am but poorly in body. Lord, help me this day lest I faint.

At half-past ten I preached from Ezek. xi. 19-21. Solemn awe rested upon the people as I expounded. "I will put a new spirit within you." At half-past twelve, without retiring, I met the class, nor could I finish before the afternoon congregation had gathered. I, therefore, just ascended the pulpit, and discoursed from Ps. cxxx. 7, 8 : "With the Lord there is mercy and plenteous redemption."

This service ended left me very unwell. At my son's, however, I got a cup of tea, an hour's sleep, and a little quiet communion with God, which refreshed me to meet the crowd that so crushed in at six o'clock, that I could scarcely push through them to the pulpit. My text was Ezek. xxxiii. 11. I showed the character of the wicked; that the wicked go in an evil way, and will come to an evil end; that neither in their way nor their end hath God any pleasure; that there is no necessity that they should persist in so vile a way, or issue in so ruinous an end; that God makes oath of His good-will toward them, hath given for them His Son, inspired for them His word, sent for them His ministers, poured forth for them His Spirit, and now, bending from His throne, commands, exhorts, nay, even supplicates, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" The excitement became very great while I insisted that it was the duty of that congregation, then and there, either to turn, or to assign to God some sufficient reason for their refusal. Nearly all stayed for prayer. At a second prayer-meeting, for which only penitents were invited, a hundred remained. I was weak and spent, but how could I leave? My dear daughter laboured nobly. I concluded the second meeting; but some who continued in distress would not stir. We fell to prayer again; several were comforted, and the rest agreed to wait upon me at eleven o'clock in the morning.

Monday, 8th.—I rose rather better. At eleven o'clock six persons came all of whom went away rejoicing. I sallied forth to Staxego, where, in the evening, I preached to forty-five persons, from, "Behold the Lamb." In after conversation I found one poor fellow with his head in a strange mist. He had been a great theological reader; but complained that, having to work hard for his daily bread, he could not, for the life of him, keep all the points in mind. Now, how could he be saved unless he believed all that Scotch divinity? And how could he believe what he had forgotten? He was in a sadly puzzled case, and was grievously perplexed. I endeavoured to direct him a way nearer than that which lay through all the old volumes on his shelves.

"Do you believe yourself to be a sinner? Do you feel your sins to be a burden? Are you now willing to renounce them all? Will you accept pardon upon God's terms?" To all these things, with much appearance of sincerity, he answered, "Yes." "Then," said I, "Can you find, or can you wish better guidance than that of God Himself in His own word?" "I cannot." I thereupon pointed out to him, in Isaiah, "Behold, I, even I, am He that blot-teth out thy transgressions for My own sake." "Now" I asked, "will you,—do you now believe that?" "Why" said he, "of course, I believe that; it is in the Bible." Well, do you expect that it is anything *not in the Bible* that is to be believed in order to salvation? But friend, it is not 'of course' that you believe it, because it is in the Bible. A little self-examination will discover that up to this very moment you never have believed it. Did you not tell me that for many years you had been seeking this very thing, that your transgressions should be blotted out, and had not found it?" "Well" the man replied, "I hope that He will blot out my sins in His own good time." I answered, "That is not what is written;

therefore, there is no need to believe that at all. Take the text into your troubled heart;—just as it is, just now,—and it will do you more good than all the technical divinity you either remember or have forgotten. Hear it: ‘Behold I, even I, am He that **BLOTTETH** out thy transgressions for My own sake.’ Do you believe God, in that His saying, now?” “Do you intend that I must believe that that promise means me?” “Undoubtedly. Promises being addressed to characters, if you have the character spoken to in any one of them, that is full warrant for personal acceptance of it. Thus, any true penitent trusting this Divine assertion, just as it stands in the Book, will find the Word so trusted to become a fact.” “I see,” he said “what I never saw before; but I must think over it.” So he left. May the Lord give him light and peace!

Tuesday, 9th.—I visited many families in the parish of Walton, got promise of a room to preach in next time, returned to Pulteney, and held a prayer meeting. One woman found peace. Bless the Lord.

Wednesday, 10th.—A stricken soul came for spiritual instruction this morning. At night I preached in Wick, from, “No man cared for my soul.” I argued that the soul ought to be cared for, because it is capable of such vast improvement; because if not cared for, it will be lost; and because, if once lost it is lost for ever. Almost all stayed to the prayer-meeting. As few can pray, this work lies heavily upon me. Lord, send labourers. I concluded, but the people would not go. There is generally a repugnance to penitent benches here; but, as we fell to prayer the second time, one poor fellow, thoroughly broken down, humbly came, wept, prayed, believed, and found mercy. Glory to God!

Thursday, 11th.—Went to Stanstil. The Clergyman threatens to close the school-room against us. I was, however, suffered to preach there this time; and did so, with great comfort, from Ps. cxvi. 5, 7: “Return unto thy rest, O my soul.” After preaching, I came over hills, bogs, mosses, and dykes, to Calder, where I was received into the house of Mr. John Bean.

Friday, 12th.—Preached in Mr. Bean’s room to as many as I could gather, from Jer. viii. 21, 22: “For the hurt of the daughter of My people am I hurt. Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of My people recovered?” I showed how, in Adam, seminally, all people existed and were the Lord’s; that in the fall of Adam all people have been hurt; that, for the hurt of that same universal people, which, originally, in Adam was His people, Christ has been hurt; that the blood of the wounds which hurt Him is an all-healing balm; that for the application of that balm the Holy Ghost is a matchless Physician. To the question, “Why then is not the health of the daughter of My people recovered?” I replied, Because many do not think that they are out of health at all; and more imagine their hurt to be so slight that certain old family prescriptions of their own will very well meet the case without the Physician. Some think themselves too far gone to be cured; while others strangely give the good Physician an ill name, roundly declaring that He never either intended to cure all, or had balm enough to do it.

Saturday, 13th.—I went over this afternoon to Sarclet. When there last, speaking of the penitent publican, I took to task such as despise others, and count themselves alone to be God's peculiar people. It has been alleged that in those sayings I was covertly striking at such as, according to the orthodoxy of the Confession of Faith, believe themselves to be the elect of God; now, clearly, unless they add fanaticism to Calvinism, and uncharitably set themselves to condemn others, my word concerned them no more than it did the Khan of Tartary. However, they thus thinking, orders had been given that, as a slanderer of the Kirk, I should be shut out of the school. From its closed door I turned into a cottage, and with much comfort preached from Ps. cxvi. 12: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits?" Surely the dragon is awake, and has declared war against me; for, on my return, a deputation awaited and strangely beset me. Revival doings have startled Wick. In market, shop, and commercial-room, the talk is, "Mr. So-and-so was on his knees;" "Miss So-and-so was weeping." The whole town votes this getting of pardon to have a very Popish look. Our friends, themselves but newly won and little established, are timorous at the storm that rattles round them. I tried to show them that this was only the stir of life, and the very answer of their own prayers; but, with great anxiety, they desired me to compromise matters, and be moderate. My son returns from the islands on Monday; will he think, when he finds all this hubbub in his Circuit, that I have obeyed his charge to mind my P's and Q's? If he meant any other thing than that I was to give myself up wholly to praying, believing, and preaching, with the sole aim of getting sinners convinced and saved, he will find me guilty of having gone astray; for thus with toil—nay, with agony—have I been doing; thus doing, bless God! I have succeeded. If this be right,—and I think Thomas Collins will say it is,—I cannot be wrong.

Sunday, 14th.—I rise this morning in the name of Christ. O Lord, be my strength; be my wisdom; be my hiding-place this day! O Lord, arise! Open the eyes of Thy people. Take from them the fear of man. Make them willing to be despised for Thee. O, cut sinners to the heart. Humble them before Thee. Help me this day. The enemies are many; and Thy people, a feeble folk, seem ready to lay down their weapons.

Morning text, Ps. vii. 9-16. Afternoon, Acts v. 31, 32.

Help me to-night, my God, that I fear not the face of man. Never yet have I failed, O Lord, to declare Thy whole counsel, whether it were against myself or against others. Let me not now be unfaithful!

Shall I, to soothe the unholy throng,  
 Soften Thy truths, or smooth my tongue?  
 How, then, shall I Thy anger bear?  
 Or in Thy purer sight appear?

I preached from those tremendous words, Ps. xxi. 8-12. Expounding them, I showed who God's enemies are; what He will do to them; what will become of their fruit and their seed; and what they

have done to deserve all this. The Word was with power. The Lord helped me to deliver my own soul. Hallelujah!

Monday, 15th.—At eleven o'clock this morning, eight persons came to me in distress. While I exhibited to them Jesus, the great object of faith, the promises of God about Him, and the sure warrants we have for at once believing them, every one of the number was enabled to do so. These eight persons—now glad in the Sin-pardoner—are the fruit of yesterday's labours. Bless the Lord!

In the evening I preached at Staxego, from Luke viii. 25. It was a good time. I showed the grounds we have for believing in Jesus; the sin of not believing in Him; the folly of putting wonder instead of faith; and the obstinacy of man in not obeying Him whom wind, and wave, and every creature else obeys. One man found peace.

Tuesday, 16th.—Preached at Keiss, at one, from Lam. v. 19, 20. Then went on to Treswick, where the schoolmaster withstood me. He declared that I was a deceiver of the people; that especially my teaching the possibility of men once saved ever perishing was nothing less than abominable. I reminded him that it was, avowedly, lest such a thing should occur to St. Paul himself, that he kept his body under; that we have it on the testimony of prophets and apostles both, that "the just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him;" that, furthermore, Christ's own promise runs in this tenor, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Texts against prejudice are like wind against a rock. He bluntly answered that the people neither liked our Arminianism, nor wanted us. It proved true that few came. To the few I preached Jesus, and promised to go again.

Wednesday, 17th.—Through pouring rain I reached the village of May. About sixty people crowded into the smithy, where, in my shirt sleeves, while my coat dried at the fire, with the anvil for a desk, I preached from Rom. i. 16: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." Many wept, and all desired me to come again.

I rode on to Skarfskerry, where I preached in the afternoon from Lam. iii. 24: "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul." In the evening I took John xx. 31: "These things are written that ye might believe."

Thursday, 18th.—On the way to Thurso I overtook a gentleman of Castleton, the place next ahead of us, in company with another from Wick. The friend from Wick asked me, "Shall you preach in Castleton?" "If I can get a room," I replied. Turning to the other, he said, "Could not you arrange that? Could not you secure the use of the schoolroom for Mr. Collins?" "Indeed," he answered, "I will do nothing of the kind. I am a true son of the Kirk. I hate this kind of work. There is too much, far too much, toleration. If it lay in my power, all this errant wildfire should soon be put down."

Thus I learned that, not systems, but loving hearts make men generous and brotherly. Persecution is no monopoly of "black Prelacy," but may be done by Presbyterians too.

At Thurso I preached to sixty people in a barn, from Ps. cxxx. 3:



"If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, who should stand?" I made many appeals. O God, let not my labour be in vain.

Friday, 19th.—Returned to Castleton; applied for use of the school. "No." For loan of a barn. "No." The schoolmaster had married one sister of the Clergyman, and the owner of the barn the other. Both resented as impertinence such a request from a Methodist Preacher. Both were too near akin to Kirk to favour heresy. Each door was barred by my faith in the world-loving God. I was at length admitted to a cottage; and, to as many as could get in, preaching from John iii. 35, 36.

Saturday, 20th.—Rose with sore throat. Set off. Prayed with the family at a cot on the way. Weary and very poorly reached Sharfskerry. Immediately retired to rest.

Sunday, 21st.—Preached in the morning from Ps. li. 10: "Create within me a clean heart." In the afternoon from Matt. xxix. 4: "Take heed that no man deceive you." I called attention to some points about which they should take heed, *e. g.*, they should believe nothing bad about the blessed God; and, except as given from Him, nothing good about themselves. They should despair of ever saving themselves even from one sin; but never doubt that the Lord can save them from all sin. They must never explain away what God has promised; or think that God will not do it; or that He will not do it now; or that grace cannot work as well in the time of health as in the hour of dissolution. They must never tell lies to appear humble, or keep sin to keep them humble. They must never imagine that the righteous live in sin: or that any who do so are anything else but servants of the devil.

At night I preached from Matt. xxiv. 45: "Who then is that wise servant," &c. Bless the Lord for three sweet seasons, and three large congregations. This is the best country in Christendom for a Minister who loves to labour in the Word and doctrine. The people seem never to tire. I began at eleven and ended at one. Re-commenced at two, and closed at five. At it again at six, kept on till eight, then held a prayer-meeting until nine. After that I met the class. After class I stayed with some distressed and anxious souls, nor could we separate till the noon of night. Bless the Lord, many were comforted. When I reached my lodgings, I found my host and his wife weeping in bitter penitence: so to prayer I fell again; and, ere we retired, both were glad in the pardoning love of God. Jesus maketh us to triumph!

Monday, 22nd.—Went in search of one whose family duties had compelled him to go sorrowfully home the night before. The Lord set him free this morning; and I, rejoicing, passed on to Lyth, and discoursed in a barn from Acts xiii. 38, 39: "Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." After sermon the seekers followed to my room. Many were made happy, and eight new names enrolled in the little Society's list.

One young man who had received much good, being invited to join, replied, "Before I do that, I must learn from you two things, viz., what do you believe? and how do you govern?" I said, "Hast thou been here to day, and witnessed such things, and yet doubttest of what we believe? Ask this poor woman." "I believe,"

said she with tears, "that Jesus loved me and gave Himself for me." "I believe," said another, "that through this Man, Christ, I am justified from all things." To their witness I added, "And I believe that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin." "Well," said the canny Scot, "this is good indeed: but how do you govern?" "Why," said I, "the Lord hath commissioned us to seek His lost and scattered sheep. This we do; and, as we find them, lead them to His open side, the sheep for whom their Shepherd died." The young man answered, "I *wad* thus believe, and thus be led: so ye can just *tak* my name *doon* too."

I was wonderfully lifted up, and a more blissful company I never saw. How preferable the simplicity and good nature in that poor cottage, to the compliment, lacquer, and sham, too frequent in politer circles! Happy souls! may the Lord multiply, sanctify, and establish them!

Tuesday, 23rd.—Returned to Wick. Attended a fellowship meeting; some were saved, and many edified.

Wednesday, 24th.—Preached. One found peace. I hear that some were much profited.

Thursday, 25th.—Preached at Stanstill from Psalm xxiii. At a fellowship meeting my Lyth friends who had come over bore noble testimonies. The Clergyman of the parish was present. He seemed much interested, took me home with him, and desired me to assist in looking over the proof sheets of a sermon which had just come in from the printer's. This was condescension which I could not have expected, and an honour which my qualifications little deserved. I found one error in citation. The text, "Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls," he quoted as, "*Until ye receive* the end of your faith," &c. I remarked, Sir, this is not what St. Peter says; nor, in fact, would it agree with St. Peter's views. Peter certainly knew that people could not rejoice at all, much less with joy unspeakable, unless they already had received 'the salvation of their souls:' for it is salvation experienced which alone can enable them so to rejoice." He looked in the New Testament, and found the words to be as I said. He turned to the Greek—I could not follow him there—but plainly saw that it helped him nothing. However, despite of me, of English version, and of Greek original, the good man was of Pilate's temper, "What he had written he had written," and not a letter of it should be altered. "Well," said he, "let it be as it is: I think it sounds stronger than the common reading!" I began to fear that I had been sought rather to be an admirer than a censor.

Friday, 26th.—I preached at Lybster. Five agreed henceforth to meet weekly for Christian fellowship.

Saturday, 27th.—I went to Sarclet. The Clergyman will neither come himself and preach in the school-room, nor suffer us to supply his lack of service. Popish spirit can live in Protestant forms, I have since I came here found that there is some truth in what somebody has said, that "Presbyter may be only Priest writ large." Such experience has caused me to remember the transfigured cat of

Æsop's fable. She looked like a lady, was called one, and married as one, but fell upon a poor mouse not less heartily than when her name was "Puss."

I gathered the people into a barn, and preached to them from Jer, xxvii. 17: "Be not Thou a terror to me. In the day of evil Thou art my hope."

I have now been here a month. I have preached thirty-nine times, met six classes, held fourteen prayer-meetings, conducted three fellowship meetings, and seen many conversions. Praise the Lord!

Of this visit Mr. Collins wrote:—"Though our people thought my father *rather too rampant*, few took offence, and many were saved. He was very laborious, very useful, very helpful. After making up for some backslidings, many deaths, and more emigrations, we count an addition of twenty members."

At the District Meeting of 1837 Mr. Collins narrated the incidents of his recent tour. He showed that merely working Wick and Stronsay was wasteful alike of time and money; that if the cause of God were to be efficiently served, there must be an intermediate station and a third man; and that by personal invitation he had found the way for evangelistic action in Walls, and Flotta, and Fara, to be quite open. Dr. Bunting, the President, admired his zeal, sympathised with his feelings, and approved his plan; but assured him and the Meeting that there was one insuperable difficulty in the way of its fulfilment,—viz., that he had not, for a considerable time, had a single name left upon the list of reserve, and that the demand for young men, in more promising places, was so in excess of supply, that there was no probability that Conference would be able to afford to Orkney another beyond its present staff.

The memory of Mrs. Collins claims of us to say, that in the Mission work of Wick she did her part nobly. To many a fever-plagued family of the poor fishermen was she an angel of mercy, carrying alike kindly words and material help. She had sometimes to dwell alone for weeks, while her husband visited the sea-sundered fragments of his flock. How well she knew, when her spirits drooped, whither to go, and how believingly she went, the following sweet lines, written June 7th, 1837, will show:—

Through unwatchfulness I've been  
 Dark and distant, Lord, from Thee;  
 Dwelt upon the verge of sin :—  
 O, my Saviour, visit me !

Grief I cannot give my heart,  
 Cannot give my eyes to see;  
 Godly sorrow, Lord, impart,—  
 Now, my Saviour, visit me !

Thou hast promised that the stone  
 From my heart removed shall be;  
 Now fulfil Thy word, Thy own —  
 O, my Saviour, visit me !

Amen ! Promise-keeping God,  
 Thine eternal verity  
 Takes away my spirit's load,—  
 Now my Saviour visits me !

The period of Mr. Collins's residence at Wick was one of mental growth. He laid plans for future reading, commenced the study of the Greek and Hebrew tongues, and gave himself, in every way, to diligent self-culture. To his former Northiam friend, James Harris, who by this time had entered the ministry, he wrote :—" I often remember the death-prayer of a pious uncle. As I knelt by his bedside, God, in order that his benediction might be suitable, opened his eyes to see one of my greatest evils. ' Lord,' said he, ' bless Thomas with a teachable disposition.' This temper of mind I think you have. Men lose much for want of it. Under the name of meekness Scripture often praises it. I send, and, as an expression of brotherly love, beg you to accept, Blair's ' Rhetoric,' Benson's ' Sermons,' and ' Pearson On the Creed.' "

We interject here, that, though Blair is now obsolete, yet, at that date, his was the best treatise our language afforded. Mr. Collins apologises for directing his correspondent's attention to " Rhetoric," but covers himself by citing a similar recommendation from saintly Bramwell, and then adds affirmation of his own consciousness of personal benefit derived from the study. The apology was unnecessary. Every workman should learn to handle his tools. Many are said to have command of language of whom it would be nearer the truth to say that language has command of them. Paucity of matter and plethora

of speech make the huge performance like Falstaff's celebrated bill:—"But one halfpennyworth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack!" Verbal mastery, not finery, was what Mr. Collins wished his friend to attain. Strong thoughts in words, fit, plain, and packed, were ever his delight.

The letter proceeds:—"Select the most important works of Wesley and Fletcher, divide them into four portions, read and present one such portion each year: of their treatises every list of a Wesleyan probationer should contain some. Quality is more than quantity. A few good books will benefit you and satisfy the District Meeting better than many inferior or unsuitable ones would do. Always have your mind employed about some text. Carry paper with you everywhere; and if God gives you a good thought, *nail it* immediately with your pen; else, when you want it, it will be gone.

"As to the title Rev., it is absurd to object to that and keep Mr. The Literalist who objects to his Minister being called Rabbi, should, doubtless, refuse himself to be called Master. To me, also, it seemed, at first, unsuitable, on the ground of my youth, that I should receive such a designation; but I soon found that, being given to all Ministers alike, it neither conveyed, nor was intended to convey, any personal compliment whatever; that, in short, it magnified the office, not the man. Conventionally, the distinction is useful. If Rev. were not upon the letters you send to me here, they would infallibly get delivered to some fish-curer or other.

"When I was at Stronsay last, Brother Pascall and I retired for prayer to the new chapel. There God gave him a clean heart, which he has retained ever since, and before the brethren at Aberdeen bore unwavering testimony of it. I should like you to come here next year."

Strange to say, Mr. Harris liked to go. The friendship must have been warm that made such an invitation seem desirable. One eulogist of the islands offered as a temptation thither, "a house by the side of an inland Voe, that would bring live herrings to the door." Another inquires, "Do you want air? Well, there is no lack of that. England's strongest winds would be thought but zephyrs at Stronsay." Mr. Collins supplied considera-

tions which he supposed more attractive, viz., that the long winter, during which rough seas forbade travel, furnished large opportunities for reading; and that, moreover, the very inconveniences of the place were such as made the situation more resemble the Great Master's: for He, as Orkney Missionaries do, often fed on barley-bread, and spent much time among the fishermen.

On Thursday, July 13th, 1837, Mr. Collins left home for Conference. On the following Sunday and Monday he preached in Glasgow. As the Society there was ripe for effectual revival action, the prayer-meetings became scenes of remarkable manifestation. Several found peace, and perhaps twenty were strengthened to claim the virtue of the cleansing blood. One asked, "How is it that many very gifted, very learned, and very laborious men never realise such results?" The answer was, "Among the brotherhood I am but a child; yet it sometimes seems to me that I could whisper even into the ears of greater men a more excellent way. Wesley tells it; the Bible tells it: Let every Methodist Minister get, keep, preach, and press full salvation. God would seal His sanctifying Word. The way of holiness is the right way: Lord, help me, and I will walk in it."

The Glasgow Stewards besought that they might be allowed to seek Mr. Collins's immediate appointment to their Circuit. His reply was, "No, no; my heart is with my own poor people."

After a visit to his mother, Mr. Collins reached Leeds. He writes, "Conference was to me a solemn sight. I could not but weep as I entered it."

On Wednesday, August 2nd, 1837, Mr. Collins, with twenty-four others, was ordained by the laying on of hands. The session is described as "short, spiritual, and pleasant." Its chief memories were of an eloquent address by the Negro Preacher, Frazer, and of a sermon by the Rev. John Hannah, noted down as "one of the right sort, and accompanied with great power."

In the return the celebrated Dr. Duff was a fellow-voyager. The jotting of him is, "A tall, thin, young-looking man; faithful in daily prayer in the saloon, and bent on speedy return to his Indian work."

Mr. Collins reached Wick in safety on Tuesday, August 15th.

Theological difficulties impeded the work in Caithness far more than material ones. Clergymen publicly denounced the Mission from their pulpits. Bigots privately spoke of Wesleyans as "a damned people, who ought to be stoned out of the country." The popular mind was thoroughly imbued with prejudice. Methodism was compelled to be militant: it could speak no word in its own dialect that would not awake a controversy. Old opinions, the dead weight of centuries, like earth-works, surrounded and defended all hearts from convincing appeal. That Christ died for all; that it is our duty to turn to Him; that we may be saved now; that we may know our sins forgiven; that we may be delivered from indwelling sin; that, after grace received, unless vigilant, we may fall away; are things which, if omitted, would leave a Methodist sermon like a bomb-shell minus the powder; but by that people each of these—axioms to us—was felt to be a challenge.

After an open-air service in Thurso, a poor woman, much conscience-smitten, followed Mr. Collins to the house of a friend, where he gave her kindly advice. Before leaving the town, he sought out the humble home where she dwelt, in order to leave with her some final instruction. Seeing that she had seven children, he prayed for them, blessed them, and besought her to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" for, said he, all their immortal souls are precious in His sight. That *all* was fatal. It broke the spell thrown over her. All precious to God? Not one, out of so many, reprobated? What heresy! To whom had she been listening? What terrible falsehood had well nigh beguiled her? From that day she held him to be a deceiver, and would never see or hear him more. Methodism had no easy task in a land where to tell a mother that God loved all her babes would drive her from its fold.

Not every one has the ready ingenuity with which Mr. Collins's father at once avoided controversy and asserted truth. A strong polemic asked him, "Do you believe in the perseverance of saints?" "Certainly," was the

unexpected reply. "Indeed! I thought you were a Wesleyan. I thought you did not." "O, Sir, you have been misinformed: it is the perseverance of *sinner*s that we doubt!" The biter, bitten, said no more, and for once debate was postponed.

At the request of the little Society at Wick, Mr. Collins published a sermon from Ezek. x. 11, entitled, "Why will ye die?" It exceedingly well mingles logic with appeal. In presence of current teaching, that by unchangeable decree God hath eternally pre-ordained many men to everlasting death, it could not be expected of a Methodist Preacher to be silent. He asks, "Is it possible for that creed to be proved without convicting the only true God of perjury? Hear His oath: 'As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.'"

The citations relied on in proof of reprobation are, by common consent, difficult places of Holy Writ. Bishop Horsley remarks, "It is no sin not to understand a dark text, but it is a great sin not to believe a clear one." Being of that mind, Mr. Collins proceeds to lay down as a rule of interpretation, that "Scriptures hard to be understood must be expounded by such as are plain." He then asks, "Can anything be plainer than this oath?" He further pushes an inquiry, "If the terms which stand in the Bible do not express universal right in the benefits of Atonement, pray tell how such right could be expressed? It is said that He gave Himself for 'the world;' 'for all;' 'for every man.' What more could be said?" To the supposed limitation by the assertion that "Christ gave Himself for the Church," he replies, "That 'Christ gave Himself for the Church,' and that 'Christ gave Himself for *none but* the Church,' are two distinct and very different propositions. The argument, that Christ gave Himself for *none but* the Church, because it is said that He gave Himself for the Church, would, if valid, prove that He gave Himself for *none but Paul*; for in Gal. ii. 20, with equal emphasis, Paul affirms, 'He loved *me*, and gave Himself *for me*.' The whole truth is beautifully uttered by St. John, where he says, 'He is the Propitiation for *our sins*,



and *not for ours only*, but for the sins of the whole world.'"

This reasoning appears to me to be manly, clear, and conclusive; but letters which it brought upon Mr. Collins show that to those who read it through Genevan spectacles, it looked weak and contrary to truth. His own people were confirmed; but I question whether one of his opponents was converted. At the Conference, an examiner pressed Mr. Collins with some predestinarian difficulty; and, to the answer given, replied, "I do not think that would satisfy a Calvinist." "Neither do I," was the response: "I never found anything that would." His experience in this line was not materially altered by the publication of this discourse.

About this time a miracle of saving mercy caused much joy. Thomas Reed, who had been reserved, morose, and, as to religious things, utterly careless, fell ill. Slow but surely mortal disease was upon him. At length he awoke to his peril. After the Bible, the Wesleyan Hymn-book was almost his only spiritual directory. He now wished those visits of the Pastor which before he had scarcely brooked. To Mr. Collins's inquiry, "What do you feel you need?" his answer was, "A heart to praise my God, a heart from sin set free." The young men of the Society made special prayer in his behalf. The very day they did so proved to be the birthday of his soul. He cried so vehemently to God that his mother feared his agony of prayer would be the death of him. At length his countenance changed, and he exclaimed, "My heart is opening; the Lord is filling me with His love. O mother, though I am a great sinner, Mercy forgives me all. Though I am a worthless wretch, heaven's gate is open before even me." Thenceforth, through months of weariness and pain, he continued praising God and exhorting men. There was not a relative he did not warn, nor an acquaintance for whom he did not pray. His days were passed in Divine communion, and his nights were cheered with song. To his mother's entreaties to spare himself, his reply was, "The Lord makes me speak." "But, dear, you must be quiet, the water is rising

towards your heart." "Never mind, mother, many waters cannot quench love, and the love of Jesus aye keeps my heart warm." "Happy, happy, happy in Christ!" were his last full spoken words. Then followed many broken whispers of God's goodness, then a gentle, but unmistakably triumphant, wave of the hand, and then he sweetly rested in his Saviour's arms, April 5th, 1838.

Mr. Collins's first child was born, April 16th, 1838. He writes, "Our solicitude has been great, and our prayers many. The help afforded, blessed be God's name, has been marvellous. The mercies of the day lay upon us new and weighty obligations to be wholly His."

The District Meeting made absence from home an early necessity. A letter to his wife, dated Aberdeen, May 9th, shows how much he felt this, "Landed at six A.M. Got breakfast at the Lemon Tree, a comfortable inn. I shall hide awhile from my Wesleyan host, that I may have a few hours with God. I will arise and go to my Father, and will try to carry thee with me. I want the Lord to give mine eyes refreshing tears; so my plan is to leave my trunk here, and wander into the country for a day's prayer. Leaving home just now has tried me strangely. Do not fret, dear love, or let your mind be agitated by my absence. Cast all your burden upon the Lord."

The following is very characteristic. "I am glad the box from our Clapham friends has arrived safely. Present, with your own, my grateful acknowledgments. But, remember, my style is plain; and fine gifts must not tempt you to forget yourself to be the wife of a Methodist Preacher. Let us keep ourselves in the love—the perfect love—of God. The Lord be ever present with thee."

The first Sunday after his return has the following entry:—"Wick, on the morning of this Sabbath, May 20th, 1838. By baptism we, in the congregation, publicly dedicated our little Emily Anna to the Holy Trinity. May she be a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. Amen."

"Patience worketh experience." "Stronsay expounded

that text to me," says Mr. Collins. "I found the people there to be amazingly slow in movement Godward, and very inconstant in the matter of abiding with Him."

Temper does not chill with the latitude. It makes us pity human nature to read how, envious of chief places in so small a synagogue, official men became jealous of each other. By this means evil speaking, annoying to endure and hard to repress, entered and did much harm in the little church. Only a Christlike spirit can keep tender amid such folly. Though moving in a narrower sphere, the workers in Wick, verily as St. Paul, could say, "We are not ignorant of Satan's devices."

Faithful toil, as it usually does, issued in success. In the face of many difficulties two complete establishments were raised. At Stronsay a chapel thirty-five feet long and twenty-five feet wide, with a gallery across the end, was built and paid for. At Wick, the Masons' Hall, but recently used as a theatre, was so fitted up that it would comfortably seat four hundred. In out-places, and over the Archipelago, were many preaching stations, cots, barns, and school-houses. Mr. Collins writes:—"We had seventy communicants last Sunday. We count a hundred and ninety-one members. God is speaking for Himself gloriously. Sinners both in town and country are finding mercy."

Thus, despite of prejudice and poverty, sin and hell, victories were won, and gems gathered, on these cold coasts and mist-covered isles. Daniel Farquhar, a worthy Minister now deceased, was one of the children given to Mr. Collins there.

We, at the commencement of this chapter, faithfully narrated the censure which withdrawal from the Mission list drew upon Mr. Collins. Acutest judges may at times be misled by appearances. *Humanum est errare*. In the moment of mistake Dr. Bunting's words had been wounding and severe: but that truly great man was too generous to be long harsh; too just ever to do intentional wrong; too wise to keep a prejudice; and too observant to be long ignorant of current facts. Orkney, apparently an exile, was really an arena. A labourer in such a new, special, and trying sphere, could not but come under the watch of our chief adminis-

trators. Thus strangely God had hidden this good man that he might be made known. Though Dr. Bunting was one of those who from the first doubted Wesleyan vocation to Orkney, yet none more clearly discerned, and none more heartily applauded, the heroic devotion with which the work there had been done. His kindly expressions proved that whatever tarnish had in his eyes aforetime seemed to overspread Mr. Collins's fair name, it had now all, and for ever, vanished. Thus, having won a good degree among those poor abjects of the north, at the Conference of 1838, he came back to England well furnished, disciplined, and strong, to be thenceforth among his brethren a beloved and trusted man.

## CHAPTER VII.

### DURHAM.

MR. COLLINS set forth from Wick, Tuesday, August 7th, 1838. He says:—"During a few hours' stay of the steamer at Aberdeen I saw Brother Hine. Ever since the District Meeting he has been living altogether for the Lord. What God has done for him he is urging in God's name upon others. His last Sunday morning text was, 'Blessed are the pure in heart.'" Refreshed in soul by this fraternal communion, Mr. Collins went aboard again; and the steamer so swiftly ran the journey,—little short of seven hundred miles,—that he, his wife, and child, were on Saturday evening enjoying the hospitalities and endearments of the Clapham family home.

Love for old friends soon drew Mr. Collins from rest. On Tuesday, August 14th, he went down to help and gladden the churches among whom he had formerly laboured. He records:—"At Staplecross I could hardly speak for emotion." "Good times at Goudhurst." "Mighty influence at Brede." "Met a crowd in a booth at Northiam, the chapel would not hold them; but the day at Tenterden was the most soul-subduing of all. The work goes on in these parts. Many still retain the power and glory of perfect love. Praise the Lord."

On Thursday, August 23rd, he returned to London; and, as a letter to his mother informs me, "found his wife quite well, and little Emily Anna grown into universal favour." This latter fact excited in him no wonder. Father-like, he adds, "Indeed, she is a sweet-tempered, smiling, engaging child."

Tuesday, August 28th.—They left Clapham for their

new station. The sea was rough ; and the feeble steamer being utterly unable to breast the contrary winds, the captain put in at Yarmouth. Leaving the weatherbound vessel at anchor, the itinerants took places in the mail, and, by hard travelling, reached Durham on Saturday at dead of night. Thanking God, who, through the wayfarings of a thousand miles, had suffered no ill to come nigh them, they retired to rest. Long travel and late arrival are poor preparatives for meeting audiences in that critical mood which naturally characterizes any congregation listening to first addresses of a Minister entering upon his charge among them. Mr. Collins writes :—“ After my small places in Stronsay and Wick, the chapel seemed very large. I preached in behalf of the funds of its Trust, and the friends met me very kindly.”

Durham, whither Mr. Collins was now called, is a city of much interest, both historic and present. To an approaching stranger, it appears impressive and unique. Castle and cathedral stand conspicuously upon a lofty eminence, which has won itself the name of “English Zion.” The Wear laves, and almost surrounds, this hill. To the river, the declivity, on one side, is rocky and precipitous ; but, on the other, gently descends in beautiful garden slopes. Traditions are plentiful of Saxon sainthood, Norman cruelty, and Border wars. In Durham’s ancient church is Cuthbert’s shrine ; near which, for ages, no woman might worship. Evil spoken of him by a princess wrought this hatred in him. Forgetting the determined misogyny of their patron, the monks began a chapel for the Virgin. The unforgiving old bachelor split the walls. Neither “*Regina Cali*” nor any of her sex should have foot-hold near him. Of course, the Reformation reformed all this. Protestant ladies, despite the doughty saint, now walk his cathedral floor, gracefully, fearlessly, and safely as elsewhere. Monuments of olden time abound. In the neighbourhood lay the chief seat of Neville, that mighty Baron, whose manors and mansions were so numerous that, without leaving his own, he could abide at a fresh one every week. Durham is, however, not possessed of feudal memories only ; few of England’s shires equal it in nineteenth century wealth. It is famous for kine,

rich in salt and coal, lead and iron, marble and freestone.

With this county, three immortal names, more precious to me than all its pits and quarries, are honourably connected : the last of the Fathers, venerable Bede ; the first of the Reformers, John Wickliffe ; the most unanswerable of the Apologists, Bishop Butler.

Mr. Wesley once visited Durham Castle, and notices, in his observant way, the stateliness of the rooms, the meanness of the furniture, and the odd devices on the tapestry. That intended to depict the Vision of Bethel is described : "On one side there is a little paltry ladder, up which an angel, much in the attitude of a chimney-sweep, is climbing ; on the other side stands Jacob, staring at him from beneath a huge silver-laced hat." The castle is now a college. Its history furnishes remarkable illustration of the tardy way in which good thoughts struggle into reality of fact. In Fuller's "Worthies," published in 1662, is the following :—"I understand there is intention of setting up a university in Durham, and some hopeful progress made in order thereunto ; which I cannot but congratulate." Alas ! Durham University—like the North Cape, which geologists declare is rising three inches in an age—lifted its head very slowly. It only got its charter in 1831, one hundred and sixty-nine years after those premature congratulations. Surely some stronger difficulty had occurred than that mentioned in those old pages, viz., "Some object that it would be monstrous for one face to have three eyes,—one land three universities." A frivolous argument, sufficiently met by the witty Doctor's wish, "that England, Argus-like, might have a hundred." Better late than never ; the university is come at last. Fuller's prayer—none the worse for keeping—we heartily join in :—"May this new spring have pure water, *i. e.*, pious, orthodox professors ; by whom the students may ever be principled and elemented at once with Learning and Religion."

At Durham kindly colleagues awaited Mr. Collins. He soon wrote, "We labour together in love." The obituary of the Superintendent, the Rev. Thomas Catterick, in the Minutes of 1861, says :—"He was of

devotional habits, great meekness, and strong faith." With this witness the entry in Mr. Collins's Journal agrees:—"He is much to my mind, plain and weighty in his words, a faithful, simple, lively, affectionate man."

The Durham home I find described as "pleasant, quite retired, in a good neighbourhood; but rather small." If the house was small, the Circuit was not. Mr. Keyse's record, at a later date, and when the sphere of labour had been contracted by the transfer of several Societies, is:—"Here we have to be at it, and always at it. To do justice to this Circuit requires the mind of an angel and the strength of an elephant." A veteran in service, physically vigorous, long disciplined to endure hardness, it was natural for Mr. Collins to feel the pressure less. Contrasts familiar to his mind were favourable. It was neither so wild as Wark, so comfortless as Orkney, nor so toilsome as Sandhurst. He writes:—"The Circuit is wide; but we have three men, and keep a horse. The number of places, however, over thirty, which are upon the Plan, makes it impossible to give necessary attention to them all." To a Minister without leisure, an ever-thickening crowd of population is not a vision of unmixed delight. Mr. Collins goes on to say:—"Need of evangelistic agency daily increases. New collieries are starting all about. Thousands of fresh inhabitants come clustering round them. Alas! we have neither chapels built to receive the people, nor time left to look after them."

"November 13th, 1838.—We have lately been holding meetings for special prayer. Blessed be God! conversions have followed; still, as yet, we have seen no extraordinary outbreak of power. As a whole, I fear the Circuit is low. A few fine old saints live very near to God. The talk of two greatly comforted me to-day. One of them knew Mr. Wesley, and the other was converted under William Bramwell. Perfect love is what my people want. I keep continually preaching it. The witness is not in vain. Many 'see from far the beautiful light;' some 'inly sigh for its repose.'"

About this time, Mr. Collins devised a scheme which, with great benefit to himself and others, was permanently used. He daily, whenever possible, set apart and



hour at noon for intercessory prayer. The following was his plan :—

“*Monday*.—For my family and kindred. These, as is right, come first. What affection suggests, Providence endorses, by putting them nearer to me, and laying them more upon me, than others.

“*Tuesday*.—My throne of grace list :—enemies, if I have any :—friends, specially beloved, specially tried, or who have specially claimed an interest in my prayers.

“*Wednesday*.—My own Connexion in general, and my own Circuit in particular.

“*Thursday*.—The universal Church of God, with careful remembrance of its decayed branches, and consideration of its current wants, perils, or progresses.

“*Friday*.—The unsaved world. Jews, Turks, infidels, heretics, and all such as are out of the way. For this litany prepare by study of the missionary map, and diligent perusal of all accessible reports of evangelistic effort.

“*Saturday*.—Implore heavenly blessing on the labours of the coming day.”

We strongly counsel young disciples reading this to adopt for themselves some such ordering of prayer. Such pre-arrangements save time and fix the mind. They exemplify what Wesley meant by “holy arts of living.” This division of topics is necessary to thoroughness. They who attempt to crowd everything into one petition, rather present a catalogue of wants than a prevailing plea. To the culture of these “still hours” I trace the singular beauty of expression, richness of idea, and plenitude of unction which marked Mr. Collins’s public exercises of devotion. Every day has moments which, like those stray stars which lie outside all constellations, prove to have been unincorporated by the most careful morning forecasts of engagement. One of these unpledged life fragments may be of small value; but the sum of such in a year constitutes an item of tremendous importance. More precious than grains of gold, or dust of diamond, may they not be utilized? To accomplish this wise economy it is best, after mapping out our staple work, to allot each day some special topic of consideration. This theme will profit-

ably occupy intervals ; will be a sort of catchall for casual leisure and odd minutes ; a thread for beads of thought, which, lacking such a string, will be scattered.

Actuaries are just who mulct riders of an increased rate for their life policies. If walkers have most toil, equestrians have most peril. Mr. Collins writes :— “ November 22nd. On the way to Thornley I was thrown from my horse. I rose uninjured by either bruise or scar. My hat was ruined and my coat soiled, but not a bone was broken. Surely He gave His angels charge concerning me.”

An entry, December 2nd, well exhibits this unwearied seeker of souls. Meeting a class, I found M—— W—— and P—— H—— to be earnest seekers of salvation. As soon, therefore, as tickets were given, we joined in prayer for them, and God blessed both of them with pardon.”

The Christmas Quarterly Meeting was a happy one. It found hearts warmed, funds improved, fifty additional members on the list, and the whole Circuit full of hope. Writing to a friend, Mr. Collins says, “ We have some sweet young men rising.” To benefit these, with the opening of 1839, he inaugurated a weekly meeting. In the spirit of one of his own aphorisms, “ He who loses the morning beheads the day,” he appointed that they should come to his study each Saturday at six A.M. The lessons imparted, doubtless excellent, would be secondary in value to the habit of early rising nurtured, and the affection won by this instance of ministerial self-denial.

With 1839, the Wesleyan *Annus Mirabilis*, came the Centenary celebrations ; joyous gatherings which were the crown of our fathers' days, and abide among the brightest memories of our own morning. Mr. Collins was gladly present at the Newcastle Central Meeting. It was a great occasion. The Revs. Dr. Bunting, R. Newton, G. Marsden, and F. A. West, were there ; with Messrs. Wood, Heald, Chappell, Farmer, and Walker of Stockton. The speeches were excellent, and the gifts abundant. Durham Circuit followed on Monday, January 7th ; and though by an almost unprecedented gale chimneys were broken, houses unroofed,

tiles thrown about, and the streets made perilous, yet the attendance was large, the feeling delightful, and the collection a success.

Naturalists affirm that there are tiny creatures with auricular organs so constructed that they cannot hear the thunder of heaven or the speech of men. The only sounds that strike their tympanum are the hum of bees, the grasshopper's call, and such like feeble pipings.

Methodism used to be ignored in politer circles; its revival triumphs were all unheard by those who, insect-like, had no ear for blessings of Heaven, or godly confessions of men. Attention of such was, however, strangely compelled when, in 1839, it came "down on the nail" with that wonderful Centenary gift of £230,000. The amazing clink of coin,—sound just suited to the mammon gamut,—awoke, startled, and set questioning the land. Since then historians have found a page for us; philosophers speculated about us; and secular prints, seeing we have a balance at the banker's, have thought it prudent *not quite to taboo* us. We hold in small esteem this respect given to coffers rather than characters, and know the world to be still God's enemy and ours.

The Centenary Fund was a thank-offering: shame if the heart of Methodism had not beat warmly for the mercies of a hundred years. It was a public proclamation of love and loyalty to our system by those who had tried it, and a much needed help to many burdened institutions. It was an example of generosity to the Catholic Church which inaugurated an epoch of unwonted beneficence. It was a grievous blow to ecclesiastical niggards of all sorts: they have had hard times of it ever since. Shamed by the munificence of poor Methodists, they have been obliged to shell out in a most distressing manner. Church and Kirk, Congregational Union, and the growing crowd of philanthropic societies have not been slow either to cite or to emulate the large free-hearted donations of that blessed year. Aggressions on sin, and claims on the purse, among all denominations multiply, until it seems a settled thing that religion is to be idle and cheap no more.

The Durham Ministers were of one heart. Mr.

Collins writes:—"We have great confidence in each other. Our meetings are gracious seasons. Any suggestion that tends to improve the Circuit is always welcome. A few weeks ago we, in private communion, partook of the Supper of the Lord. We were by that service much knit together and refreshed." The result of diligent brotherly toil appeared at the close of the March quarter in the addition of one hundred members, with a hundred and fifty on trial. It was sad at the District Meeting to find this Durham increase more than swallowed by retrogressions in other Circuits, which left numbers, as a whole, sixty-five less than the total of the previous year. The chief cause was the political excitement which at that time greatly agitated all towns in the north. The popular cry was loud for universal suffrage, vote by ballot, annual Parliaments, and many changes in the poor law. Demagogues laboured to set the workers against the wealthy, and organized them by thousands into unions designed to win a charter guaranteeing the wished-for changes. Open-air meetings, sometimes by night, were held, at which inflammatory addresses were delivered, and appeals to physical force threatened. Wild theories of a communistic sort became so rife that timorous, well-to-do people began to live in fear. A Methodist Preacher amid the clamour of such boisterous discussions would be ill-circumstanced for his work as an evangelist on a vessel in a gale. The mariners are too busy, and the passengers too frightened to attend. Earnest entreaties fall like whispers, and are lost in the hurlyburly of the tempest. All thought of anything but the safety of the ship seems out of place, until either returning calm assures it, or despair makes further effort hopeless.

The frequency with which, about this time, Mr. Collins was selected at home and solicited abroad for special services proves him to have been alike beloved by his own people, and of growing repute among the churches around. I find him at Houghton, Shields, and Newcastle. Platform jottings yet remain, telling with whom his labours were associated. Archbell, "rich in facts;" Clough, "kind, open, ardent;" Newton, "peerless in eloquence;" and others, are

mentioned with characteristic notes. As for himself, in outgoings as at home, pardon, revival, and holiness were his constant themes. How he prepared and how he prevailed, the record concerning Sunderland may be accepted as a specimen :—" Having sought the Lord by earnest prayer, I found in the service His gracious presence : many were healed."

For soul-saving, Mr. Collins had not only a vocation but a passion. Rest from such work seemed to him disaster. On the few days his much-demanding Circuit left unfettered, cottage services were improvised, or outdoor preaching undertaken. He sought, indeed, occasional change, but no vacation. Thus the yearnings of first love drew him to re-visit the scenes of his early mission at Wark. That week crowded with preachings, and lovefeasts, and godly visits, in which new converts were won, and old friends edified, yielded him much joy; but no repose. This leisureless life, too exhausting to be long, was more benevolent than prudent. When the strong man prematurely bowed, and the harvest-field had to be left ere nightfall, he saw this, and quaintly remarked, " I might have lasted longer, had I sometimes set my back against a tree."

His vigilance of opportunity was remarkable :—" A few weeks ago I heard of the illness of Miss G——, the daughter of a surgeon. Hearing that she was anxious about her soul, I wrote requesting permission to visit her. It was granted. I found her truly penitent, and left her rejoicing in Salvation. Life soon after ebbed away, but her end was peace."

Again :—" Visiting on Sabbath, in the interval between services, I found Mrs. Still,—long an attendant at chapel, yet, until that very day, utterly ignorant of the grace of God. She was troubled,—and well might be,—seeing that consumption had brought her to the verge of the grave. While hearing of faith's simplicity, her heart was strengthened for its exercise. The change from gloom to gladness was immediate and manifest. Joy seemed to wipe every wrinkle from her face. With tears she declared that Jesus was hers,—that death had no terrors,—and that all her fears were gone." The precious and speedy effect of this marvel of mercy was the salva-

tion of the husband ;—a fact which so gladdened the poor sufferer that it turned to ecstasy the good confession with which triumphantly she passed home to God.

Friday, July 26th, 1839, Mr. Collins set forth to Leeds, *en route* to Conference. In suitable seasons, for a journey not too long, a well-appointed coach exceeds in pleasantness our modern railway mode. Upon this occasion all things concurred. The team was good, the company was sensible, and the country beautiful ; the fields on either hand were lively with busy farmers, and the air perfumed with the smell of fresh hay. “ Altogether,” says Mr. Collins, “ it was most agreeable.” He found his father happy in that Leeds Mission work, which occupied the remainder of his useful life. “ It would have touched your heart ”—a letter says—“ to have heard the tender cross-questionings father and mother put me through concerning our little Emily Anna. They fairly cried for a sight of her.”

Railway *versus* Coach would have got a more favourable verdict next day. Mr. Collins writes :—“ I had taken an inside place for Manchester ; but, as the weather was wet, gave it up to accommodate some ladies. A poor woman, who sat on the top with her babe, quite unsheltered, got my umbrella. I reached Droylesden, with no further harm than the soaking of my coat, and found my sisters well.

The next day—like himself—he preached out of doors once, in chapel three times, and closed the whole with a blessed prayer-meeting. On Monday, the train conveyed him to Liverpool. His Journal states :—“ On going where my instructions directed me, I found the house all in disorder. One of the children having been stricken with fever, the gentleman had procured another place for the rest of the children, and for me. Thither I followed them ; but, strange to say, an inmate of that house suffering a similar seizure, I found them, therefore, just removing again. Knowing that under such circumstances a visitor must be a trouble to them, I essayed to excuse myself, but they would not listen to me for a moment. So, this double migration ended, I find myself settled at last, in perfect health and in comfortable lodgings, at 15 Tyrer Street North.”

The gathering of Ministers was larger than had ever met at Conference before. Though numerous, the Conference was blessedly unanimous. It had been a glorious year. Near seventeen thousand members had been added to the Societies. Glad tidings came alike from Mission Stations and from English Circuits. One hundred and eighteen candidates, a number at that time beyond all precedent, offered themselves for the ministry. Fifty-two young men were ordained. Of one of them, David Gravel, now in heaven, Mr. Collins writes :—" It would have done you good to have heard his witness of the Lord's dealings. Being imperfect in English, he was permitted to use his native tongue, and one was appointed to interpret. Fervour led him to speak long without pausing. The translator, finding it impossible to remember all, gave us the substance. On he went again, and again was abridged. ' He does not tell you half,' cried the warm-hearted fellow, ' I will try for myself.' He did, and moved us all exceedingly. As passion grew intense within him, he burst off with a Welsh hymn. None could join him, but all were thrilled."

The crowning glory of the Conference of 1839 was the marvellous unction which marked the devotional and religious services connected with the Centenary celebration. Joy, mingled with tenderness and tears, pervaded the meetings. The holy feeling, while the Rev. Thomas Jackson, in the Centenary sermon, set forth Methodism as a revival of Apostolic Christianity, was overwhelming. Mr. Collins's final notice of that Conference is very characteristic :—" Perhaps never before were the brethren so graciously visited, aided, and drawn out in devotional services. In this baptism I shared. It has been a happy time. Yet, having here but limited opportunity for secret reading and prayer, I feel the lack, and long to reach home. For me sermons and public exercises are not enough. I never prosper without much retirement."

The third Preacher of the Durham staff unfortunately fell ill just as Conference closed. It was a considerable time before he was able to come to his Circuit at all. When he did come, he could do little ; and, ere the year

closed, was compelled by continued weakness finally to retire from the ministry. Such a failure—saddest of all for the sufferer—could not but be a source of great perplexity to colleagues in a Circuit of such inexorable requirements.

About this time joyous tidings of a glorious work of God at Kilsyth reached Mr. Collins. Special meetings for exposition, prayer, and religious conference had raised the spiritual tone of the church there. On Lord's day, July 21st, 1839, the Communion Service was greatly blessed to many. A missionary sermon the next evening was accompanied with unction. At its close an outdoor service, to be conducted by W. C. Burns, was announced to be held on the morrow in the market-place. At the appointed time a great crowd gathered. As rain threatened, the church was thrown open, and the miscellaneous crowd rushed in, packing every nook and corner. The service, tender, affectionate, and solemn, seemed to melt everybody. The preacher—pledged to go forth from his native land as a Missionary—told them in his final appeal how he dreaded the thought of leaving undecided for God so many whom he should probably see no more, until he met them in front of the "Great White Throne." While with thrilling earnestness he besought them there and then to accept of Christ, the emotion became indescribable. The preacher's utterance died away in choking sobs. The precentor set forth a psalm; but the tune strangely trembled and quavered, in a manner not noted in the music book, until he fairly broke down in a gush of tears. Then the people lifted up their voice and wept. Prayer burst spontaneously from unwonted lips. The clergy, elders, and praying men took out such as seemed most distressed; vestries and sessions-house were soon filled with anxious souls. The service was continued until late, and had to be renewed day by day. The whole town was astir. The next Lord's day, four thousand people gathered to service in the churchyard, while numbers of women without bonnets, and men and children in the rough garments of field and shop, gathered at the usual hours, in the sanctuary, with the accustomed worshippers, showing how the heart of the



lowest deeps of the population had been reached. Politics lost their zest. Kirk and Secession forgot their differences. Love breathed everywhere. Religion appeared to absorb everybody. The Minister declared the influence to have been so general, that a stranger going haphazard into any house in the parish would almost be certain to find himself surrounded by it.

To the Rev. James Harris, then of Montrose, Mr. Collins says:—"This is noble work. God's thoughts are not ours. I am sure I thought Scotland to be, of all countries, the least likely theatre of revivals. I hope you, on the eastern side, are catching the flame. Preach them perfect love : stick to it."

Care of promising young men, an important ministerial duty, was affectionately given by Mr. Collins. Thus, wishing him a wider sphere, he sent for Daniel Farquhar from the Isles of Orkney, paid his passage, and maintained him until he found a situation in which he could maintain himself. He got him upon the Plan, made him free of his library, guided his studies, and opened before him the door into that ministry which, though briefly, yet worthily, he was permitted of God to exercise.

The March Quarterly Meeting brought with it a new and unexpected test of character. Officials had quietly agreed to pass the first Minister by, and warmly urge Mr. Collins for next year to accept his place. Law and usage agree to make it the undoubted right of Quarterly Meetings to reinvite Ministers or not, as may seem best to themselves. Legal rights, however, when pushed extremely, often become practical wrongs. The correlative of that lay right must be, that Ministers wished to remain have, of course, equal freedom of refusal. Kindness suggests that no man whom it is purposed to pass by should be left unwarned. Ostracism should not be allowed to come upon him in a public meeting unexpectedly. Justice demands that from Ministers desired to continue, nothing relating to choice of partners for their work should be kept secret. Their happiness is so involved in the question, that they have a claim to know as early and as much as can be known. Any man may properly resent proposals which would seem to identify

him with schemes that would elevate himself at the expense of another. He is unworthy the brotherhood who would accept any step of advancement purchased by what his own judgment regards to be evil treatment of his senior. Several of these considerations intuitively presented themselves, and the plan was at once broken by Mr. Collins's firm refusal. He would not hear of it for one moment, nor accept, in any case, the position the device had been meant to achieve for him. The incident is recorded as witnessing at once his popular favour and his fraternal fidelity.

Durham about this time succeeded in two new things :—it got a new organ into its chapel : “ Not without need,” says Mr. Collins ; “ for the choir was the most pitiful I ever knew ; ”—and next, the town, for the first time, received the Ministers of the District, to hold there their annual meeting.

It would be wrong to pass unnoticed Mr. Collins's exemplary goodness to the different branches of his own family. At his charge the youngest sister was well and carefully educated to take position as a teacher. The last-born brother also, at no small expense, was brought up to scholarship ; in fact, received a thorough University training. Utterly unfitted, by loss of a leg, for the labours of a Methodist itinerancy, yet conscious of a Divine vocation, as soon as he attained his Bachelor's degree, he sought and had ordination as a Clergyman. His feeble health too early broke. Gentle, thoughtful, devout, much loved by all who knew him, his removal left a blank not to be filled by many showier men. To those elder members of the family whose lifepath had been entered before it was in Mr. Collins's power to do much in the way of directing them, he was, all through, standing counsel and pillar of help. “ Meeting C. in Liverpool,” he says, “ I bought him a hat, presented him with a New Testament, gave him abundance of good counsel, and promised, if he did well, that I would find fifty pounds for him when he should set up for himself.” To H. he writes :—“ What a merciful Heavenly Father we have ! How gracious he has been in saving you ! Give yourself to reading the Bible and to prayer : that is the way to grow in grace. God has bestowed

upon you a good understanding : improve it to the uttermost, that you may be fit to serve Him. Let me know how you do in business. If you should be in straits at any time, do not fear to tell me. I love, as far as I can, to help those who help themselves." Similarly he requests his sisters :—" If pinched, never fail to tell me. I would always rather spare a pound or two than have you suffer lack." While thus generous, he was not thriftless or thoughtless. He says :—" I send a cheque ; but tell E. that she must put down, and send me word, how every penny is expended. Order and economy are necessary lessons for young people ; and if she does not learn them now, she will be in difficulties when thrown upon her own resources." Affection for his sickly, nerve-shaken mother was always strong and very tender in him, and his care of his warm-hearted, self-sacrificing father was constant. A letter says : " Dear father, to hear of your illness grieves, but does not surprise, me. Do be more careful. You are irregular at meals, and go too late to bed. In meetings you exert yourself to a degree that neither your body, nor any body, could long sustain." Mr. Collins's beneficence gilded the declining years of his parents, conferring many comforts which the narrow stipend of a Town Missionary could not have reached.

June 30th, 1840, Mr. Collins writes :—" We need more of the love, power, and fellowship of God. Of all speculation, mining speculation is most absorbing, and everybody here seems drawn into it. New pits are opening perpetually. Hurry forbids thought. Business continually growing, keeps all heads in a whirl. Amid this earthly tumult the Lord's work proceeds but slowly. We rejoice, however, that the enemy does not have it quite all his own way ; like the shepherd Amos tells of, (iii. 12,) we get ' out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or the piece of an ear.' So at our Quarterly Meeting we found a considerable increase of numbers ; and Stewards, free from care, were jubilant with fifty pounds in hand."

The Conference of 1840 was held at Newcastle. It being only fifteen miles away, Mr. Collins hired pleasant lodgings in Claremont Place, took over his family,

and kept them in residence there during the festival weeks. Of the Conference he writes :—"In ordinary discussions there is great freedom both in speech and manner; but whenever anything arises touching either the honour of God or the purity of the Body, the solemnity which the proceedings then invariably assume greatly impresses me. The deep anxiety on all questions of character produces a sense of awe almost indescribable. It would be easier to me to die than to stand arraigned as a delinquent at the bar of that assembly."

The Conference wisely abridged the over-wide Durham Circuit by transferring several places and some hundreds of members to the newly-formed Shotley Bridge Circuit.

Further notes say :—"The Conference services have been spiritual and profitable. The preaching of the Rev. P M'Owan particularly affected me. The Connexion has an addition to its members of twenty-two thousand five hundred and fifty-one; while more than a hundred candidates afford evidence of God's call in their hearts to ministerial work. Praise the Lord!"

"Saturday, September 12th.—I spent an hour, at his home, with the Rev. G. S. Faber, the celebrated Master of Sherburn Hospital. His able, learned writings have aforetime given me considerable instruction. Through them I have become especially interested in the salvation of the Hebrew people. Though venerable, the worthy Prebend is yet hale and active. His desire for the spiritual good of adjacent colliery workers pleased me much.

"Saturday, September 26th.—I went out to Coxhoe, and held in the evening a fellowship meeting. The next was a glorious day,—a day of days for God's children there. Such a weeping time I hardly ever knew. We had a sweet lovefeast at Hill Top in the afternoon; but the evening service, closed with the Sacrament of the Supper, crowned all. Every heart seemed melted, and at the Lord's table two of our leading friends entered joyously into the bliss of perfect love.

"Monday, October 5th.—Hearing that a poor fallen Methodist was in the workhouse, I went to see him. Sin had 'found him out.' There he lay, sick and sorrowful;

the corner of a great room in that ill-cared for Union his only refuge. His linen was very dirty, and his wants little attended to. I found the prodigal wishing to return. I trust that there, amid those paupers, he did get again the Father's kiss.

"Sunday, October 11th.—I rose at five to seek the Lord. He drew near to me. He helped me to preach in Durham with liberty and power. We had a great shaking. I felt so strongly for the work of God, that I thought my heart would have broken. The church here has been sadly world-pressed, sluggish, and dull. I was led to declare simply how much I had felt in their behalf, and how much I had tried to raise them. Having done this, I solemnly charged upon them the delay of the revival of God's work. The Word smote. The fire burned. In the prayer-meeting salvation work was done. I look for more. My soul abides in precious satisfying communion with the Triune Jehovah. Adored be His holy name!

"Thursday, October 15th.—A blessed revival is in progress at Shotley Bridge. The Lord is affecting sinners at their own firesides. One of our members, a travelling dealer, when on his round that way last week, found that in the cottages, for some miles of his route, he could scarcely get in a word about worsted and small wares, the people were so taken up with talk of Christ and things Divine."

In answer to a request for a week of help in the Wolsingham Circuit, Mr. Collins told his friend, the Rev. James Harris, "Having reached the third year of my ministry here, I do not like absence on the Sabbath. I feel that, if I would gather my sheaves before I go, I must be more engaged for this people than ever. However, I have laid your wish before my Superintendent; and for the week-nights he consents that I should come and serve you." Accordingly, November 2nd found Mr. Collins there. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday were employed in Missionary Anniversaries. Diligent everywhere, Mr. Collins gathered fruit in parlours as well as chapels. In one home a servant found peace; at another, the master was filled with perfect love. On Thursday night he preached at High House, and met

there Aaron Ritson, who is named by Mr. Wesley. The Diary reads :—" Though aged, he is still active, a Leader in the Society, and fully alive to God."

" Saturday, November 7th.—I went in the afternoon to Walldridge, that I might be fresh and ready for Pelton Fell on Sunday. I preached a short sermon, and held a fellowship meeting after.

" Sunday, November 8th.—I rose early, and spent an hour in prayer with Thomas Gibbon. After which I took a walk, that I might talk with God alone in the solitude of the Fell. At half-past ten I preached, and at the close of the sermon administered the sacrament. A more gracious communion I have seldom known. The words ' given for thee,' strangely moved my heart ; and, as I repeated them to each, seemed to thrill the people. There was a general weeping. One was so deeply affected that, if I had not placed the elements in his hand, and then directed his hand to his mouth, he could not have received. In the evening, at Framwell Gate Moor, the Lord was with us again. Four persons obtained peace with God, and one backslider was restored."

Being found so useful, this prefacing the Lord's day by Saturday services soon became common with Mr. Collins. Much good came of it. To one blessed meeting of the kind, held at Pitlington, on November 21st, seven persons were known to date their salvation.

Did anybody ever like the total of an attorney's bill ? The following entry shows one, in Mr. Collins's eyes, not to have been very lovely.

" December, 7th.—The solicitor who prepared Stronsay Chapel Deed sent me in a charge of twenty guineas, with a request for the money by return of post. The sum for so *wee* an affair appearing to me extravagant, I wrote informing him that as it was not a property, but a charity, the cost of which would come out of my private purse, I felt that I might request him to tax his bill, and reduce it to the most favourable possible terms. The answer, immediate and very curt, was, that upon condition cash arrived by next mail, he would accept twenty pounds ; but that if payment was not thus prompt, he should not only claim the whole, but

demand interest too. I freed myself from further communion by sending a cheque for the amount, and thus gladly got done with the lawyer."

About this time a friend sent a broadsheet which was being distributed widely by a Sussex Clergyman, to induce the Wesleyans of Northiam to forsake their Ministers, and put themselves under the legally appointed pastors of the Establishment. The paper all through quietly assumed Divine rights of Hebrew priests to be the heritage of Anglican clerics. Mr. Collins remarked: "As I read the weak whining thing, one point of resemblance did indeed strike me between Episcopal and Aaronic priesthoods: 'Law maketh men high priests which have infirmity.' If that document fairly represent the teaching they will get by going, Methodists will be likely to stay where they are."

May 21st, 1841, registers an incident of great domestic interest. "Yesterday my dear wife brought me another sweet daughter. I was at Newcastle, at the District Meeting, at the time. Through the care of our heavenly Father, all was well. We shall call her 'Maria Graham,' after her aunt,—an excellent creature who, very literally imitating her Master, 'goes about doing good.'"

July 21st.—I have just finished the life of Charles Wesley. How full of fatness!

Opportunities of profit and occasions of public interest were not neglected by Mr. Collins. He writes:—"Monday, August 2nd.—I attended the Bishop of Durham's Visitation Service. I do not know who the preacher was. The sermon, on 'Search the Scriptures,' though turgid in style, was good in doctrine. His Lordship in his address rebuked Incumbents who beat down stipends of Curates, censured the Oxford Tracts strongly, inculcated avoidance of novelties either in teaching or worship, and urged study of the Scriptures in their original tongues. Concerning this last point he argued that those who did thus would be equal scholars, better Christians, and better divines than such as gave all their strength to study of the Fathers."

In a letter sent, Tuesday, August 3rd, 1841, to the Rev. James Harris, then attending Conference, Mr.

Collins says :—" President Dixon, health and long life to him ! How does he bear business fatigues ? What a state our Mission work is in :—a hundred applications for men : a hundred men ready to go : no money to send them ! How is Mammon to be mastered ?

"What a pity that large societies should have been disturbed by raising a millinery question ! 'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem ;' and beware of the Scribes who 'desire to walk in long robes.'

"That volume of 'Takings' is a perplexity. Its author has undeniably great talent. Is it not grievous that he did not find some better thing to be doing with it ?

"The 'Watchman' will inform me of the course of discussion ; but I wish you specially to note and write for me those private touches and passages which, though not printed, equally reveal the mind and heart of the Conference. A good correspondent will give the incidents and tone, as well as the conclusions of such an assembly."

One great cause of the steady strength of Mr. Collins's spiritual growth lay in his habitual seasons of seclusion, fasting, self-examination, and prayer. How much he prized these weekly audiences with the King, may be learned from the answer given to a friend, who besought him to prolong a visit so as to take a Thursday night service. "The only objection is, that it will involve me in company and travel all through Friday. Now Friday at home I always spend in my study. Regularity suits me best. I am not, however, so tied to a particular day that I cannot, when necessary, change it. If, therefore, you can secure me a private room, I will for once take Thursday for retirement instead, and stay with you."

A letter to a Sussex friend contains very judicious remarks upon fasting, which, from one so practised, some may prize. "You fast the whole day : if you can do so without material inconvenience, go on. But if you find that it leaves you unable to attend to business with vigour ; or causes you to feel irritable, and to be easily vexed ; or inclines you, when the fast is over, to devour food rather than to eat it ; or, while the fast continues takes up attention more with subduing craving



than practising devotion; then, I advise that you, as I do, keep in your chamber toast-water with a few slices of dry toast, and take of them as need requires: so will you be more composed and devout. Your abstinence will be known unto your heavenly Father, while yet you will not appear unto men to fast. Do not mistake; *fasting is not a penance; pain is no part of the profit of it.* The true idea is, care of the body postponed, in order that undivided attention may be given to spiritual exercises."

The following, selected from Durham Friday records, are precious closet photographs; fair samples of the searching inquiries, practical resolves, and happy communings that characterized his weekly returning day of abstinence.

"Friday, May 29th, 1840.—I see the necessity of seeking to grow in grace *every* day. I desire a closer walk with God. O my Father, if I would live near Thee, I must be faithful to Thee. Show me in what I can amend. I will try:—

"1. In endeavouring to keep up a more pervading savour of godliness in my own family.

"2. In preaching, witnessing, and pressing entire sanctification more plainly.

"3. In more carefully arranged and methodical pastoral visitation.

"4. In greater effort to make each visit tell, by spiritual conversation, and by frequent, pointed, well-considered questions.

"5. In earnest labour for revival in every service, and in every part of my Circuit.

"6. In praying more constantly and fervently for the salvation of God's ancient people, and for the universal outpouring of the Holy Ghost. These things by Thy help, O Lord, I resolve to do.

"Friday, August 28th.—Lord, help me to renew my covenant with Thee. I am beginning another ecclesiastical year: in what can I improve?

"The answering Word seems to be, 'Walk circumspectly, as wise, redeeming the time.'" I have done too little before breakfast. This has been foolish. Time lounged is talent buried. Should I, a Minister of God,

be slower to my work than pitmen to their mines, labourers to their fields, or the mechanic to his toil? An example of vigilance is wanted from me both by family and flock. By early rising I might have communed with God more; might have received more of His image; might have gained increase of power; dug into deeper treasures of the Word; been a better-read theologian, and a better-disciplined man. I cannot either retire as early, or do with as little sleep, as Mr. Wesley did; but I may, I ought, I will arise at a quarter to six. Till half-past six shall be spent in devotion. Chosen divines will afterwards occupy me till eight. Breakfast and family worship may be allowed an hour. From nine till ten, Greek and Hebrew on alternate days. From ten to twelve, compose. From twelve till one, read the Scriptures and pray. From one till two, dine. During the afternoon, visit among the people either in town or country."

Mr. Collins not only mastered himself, and rose thus early, according to plan; but, as a letter to his youngest sister humorously describes, found a successful regimen for sluggishness in another. "Brother Barney is fond of bed; but, some time since, feeling that all was thrown into hurry by morning lateness, he promised, if I would call him, that he would arise. I did so: but instead of turning out he turned over. At breakfast his place was vacant. As this was worse than before, I slipped upstairs to see what the cause might be. Behold you, he was asleep! asleep so soundly that my presence in the room did not awake him. A sponge lay so temptingly upon the stand that it immediately and irresistibly suggested 'water cure.' I filled and squeezed it gently over him. At that cold comfort he started, stared, and was out like a shot: and, what is better, O rare virtue of the recipe! he has been up without an alarum every morning since." We return from this note of playful benevolence to graver records.

"Friday, September 4th.—I have found the benefit of living by method. I have had more comfort and more power. This day I want, and seek, deeper concern for souls, and fuller sympathy with Jesus my Master in pity for mankind. O for a great revival this third year!

“Friday, September 11th.—My experience improves: but I want more Divine power; I want it always to abide. I have, therefore, this day prayed to be filled with the Spirit.”

Devoted Ministers are always a blessing to their brethren. Many a Methodist Preacher carries this day a warmer heart through contact with Thomas Collins. From the first his zeal was infectious. One tells me, “I sat by him in his first District Meeting. His words were few, but weighty: his questions, grave and piercing: e.g., ‘Is the work prospering? Do you see conversions? Do you preach perfect love? Do you enjoy it?’ Such brotherly inquiries, not always pleasant to answer, made me feel as if I had a live conscience sitting at my elbow. Thought of moving on a few seats occurred to me; but, somehow, his simple goodness charmed more than his queries stung. I could not leave him, and never ceased to love him.”

Friday, October 16th, a similar case occurred. Just as Mr. Collins’s appointed lonely hours were ended, his junior colleague, the Rev. William Roberts, came in. Replete with heavenly affection, it being well with himself, Mr. Collins began tenderly to inquire after his brother’s weal. It appeared that while in Sheffield, his native town, Mr. Roberts for a time had walked in unclouded light; but, strange to say, since entering the ministry his soul had consciously sunk to a lower stand. While Mr. Collins urged upon him how unworthy and intolerable it would be for one with such a vocation to continue so fallen, smitten by those faithful words, a tempest of feelings mastered him. Then the two friends together fell upon their knees; God drew near, filled the young man with perfect love, and sent him home rejoicing with the pearl. It is believed that the blessing of that hour was abiding. His labours thenceforth were marked by richer unction and larger results. His short career terminated in less than two years. The end came suddenly, but found him ready. The memorial of him in the “Minutes” declares him to have been “deeply pious, very zealous, a diligent student, an energetic preacher, and altogether a very hopeful man.”

“Friday, April 16th, 1841.—The Master finished the work of His earthly life at thirty-three; I, last Monday, entered upon my thirty-second year; but how little have I done! Nine years of ministry have gone. Alas! review of them pierces me with a sense of unprofitableness. Not that I have been sparing of my own labour: the great defect has been that I have not enough claimed, realised, and wielded Divine power. More must be done for the honour of God, and for the salvation of souls. My cry is, ‘Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?’ Servants of God in ancient times went to the throne, and waited there till they prevailed. May not I? Thinking that to this the Holy Ghost is gently drawing me, I dedicate the next three hours to seeking the Lord.

“O my Father, my business is with Thee. Thine indwelling, abiding power, hast Thou not given it to others? May I not have it? Art Thou a respecter of persons? As instructed by Thy Word, I see that peculiarities of time, or place, or opposition, are no bar to Thee. I am bidden to desire, and pray, and believe. With Thee willing to do great things, why have I been content with little? O give me repentance; soften my heart: make me ashamed before Thee of my ignorance and spiritual feebleness; of the levity of my heart, the slackness of my hand, and the littleness of my fruit. Make me alarmed lest life fly away before I begin to live.”

In such appeals the appointed hours passed. Faith won its reward; and the final record in these words registers the triumphs of that memorable day. “Thou hast given me life now. O may I ever keep it! May my coal, now all aflame, never be quenched!”

“Fellowship of the Spirit” was the chief form of self-growth in Durham. We, of course, do not mean that experience of that was unknown before, but that there it became intimate and characteristic. He says, “I used to think it was the thunder, I have now learned it to be the lightning that strikes.”

“Friday, May 21st.—The District Meeting is over. The company of brethren has been refreshing, yet I now gladly retire and shut my closet door. To me, in secret

and alone, the anointing comes. I more than ever feel that, except in the power of the Spirit, I can do no worthy thing either for God or man."

A letter dated June 3rd, says :—"Let us not think anything as of ourselves ; our sufficiency is of God. Let us, for we may, be able Ministers ; not of the letter which killeth, but of the Spirit which giveth life. I have meditated much lately upon John vii. 37, 40. I talked with my Master about it yesterday under a tree, begged a draught of His water, and received it. When we are fully devoted to the work and things of God, then are we happy ; then the Spirit comes and fills us with intelligence, purity, tenderness, energy, and bliss."

Convinced that evangelistic power, not being of self, is only at the full when the man becomes the channel, instrument, and minister of the Spirit, Mr. Collins most diligently marked the promises which pledge such Divine condescension, pleaded them, and in expectant faith yielded himself up for their fulfilment. His studies turned into the same track with his devotional exercises. Authors who have dealt thoroughly with the subject were taken up with avidity. Goodwin on the Holy Spirit was carefully read. An analysis of Owen's folio, accurately framed as any I ever saw, still remains among his papers. That ponderous tome, not generally lively in style, has one smart passage, which, carrying a sting that might prick pretenders of our own day, deserves notice : An ancient legend tells that an angel whipped Jerome for emulating Cicero. Dr. Owen, answering unorthodox men who complained of being nicknamed Rationalists, adverts to this tale. Believing, equally, that the pages of the old Father lacked polish, and that the Polemics of his time lacked cogency, the great Puritan boldly pronounces that, if Jerome were so chastised, the seraph was too ready with his rod ; and that, if they be so called, their revilers have been injudicious in the choice of a name. "For his own part, he repudiates concurrence alike in the ancient fustigation or the modern reproach ; and can conscientiously promise that he will neither call the crabbed monk Ciceronian, nor the limping logicians rational." I fear the saint would rather take his flogging, and the opponents bear

their label, than escape by such a verdict. Not, however for gems of wit, but for wealth of truth, did Mr. Collins search every chamber of that noble storehouse of divinity, of which, though two centuries have gone since it was written, we may affirm that, as yet, no work in our language, on its theme, approaches it in exhaustive fulness.

A later fast-day record reveals this same topic stirring him once again :—

“Friday, June 18th.—I get more religion. My views of Divine things take stronger hold of my feelings. I am determined to live and preach in the Spirit more than ever. Edward Brookes has spent some successful days in this neighbourhood recently. But for pressure of tickets I would have been with him. He has learned that secret which many good men, great men, and most exquisite preachers seem not to know. He honours the Spirit ; dwells in the Spirit ; bends faith, with all his power, to expect mighty workings of the Spirit : hence the Spirit honours him, uses him, and blesses the people through him.”

The following is the record of the last Durham fast-day :—

“Friday, August 6th, 1841.—Six hours this day I dedicate to acts of devotion. I desire to humble myself before God for the unfaithfulness of the last three years ; to seek renewed assurance of Divine favour now ; to commit myself and family to God’s care for our journey ; to implore blessing upon my visit to Sandhurst ; and to get baptized with the Spirit of power for entrance upon my new Circuit.

“While lying low in the dust before my Lord, I yet feel that I have much for which to praise His goodness and exalt His glorious name. By His grace, I have had order in my family, peace with my colleagues, and affection from the Church. Conversions have sealed my ministry, and some have been led into the way of Perfect Love. I retain Entire Sanctification. Many seasons of refreshing have been given to me, both in public and in private ; and, now, my heart is fixed. For blessing upon pastoral visits, and for help continually to preach a Free, Present, Full Salvation, I humbly and reverently thank my God.

“ But my usefulness,—how small it has been ! O God, the shame of its littleness I take to myself. I have not been straitened in Thee. I have erred in calculating when I should have been believing. I have regarded, with disturbing fear, my own feebleness, the poor abilities of our working staff, the political disturbances, the pressure of worldliness, and the sluggishness of the Society. I ought to have looked only at the promise, and trusted the glorious, all-conquering power of God. Not doing this has limited the Holy One, wronged the Church, and hurt my own soul. O Lord, pardon ! O Lord, help ! Henceforth,—despising outward things,—may I look to Thee alone.

“ My love to God, though supreme, has not been sufficiently active. The fire has had a steady glow, but has lacked ascending flame. The compass has pointed to Christ, but the ship has moved heavily. O that I had felt always as I have felt sometimes ! I must have greater fervour. I have pledged to Thee more simple faith ; may I be true. The faith will bring the fervour.

“ As a student, I have done little. Repenting my heaviness, want of order, and of steady perseverance, before that God who requires of me that I feed His people with knowledge, I hope in Him to amend.

“ As a preacher, I have not sought praise of men ; but has there been no fear of their displeasure ? no shrinking from attacks upon sin in the Church ? no tameness in description of Christian privilege and duty out of deference to aged, unprogressive members ? O Lord, there are Methodists who will not stir ; Thou knowest they will not stir. I have not feared evil men ; may I never more fear slow and difficult good men. Help me to give witness for Thee, clear, and strong, and high. May I never idolize men, or gifts, or system. Be Thou my All. God is great ; God makes great. O Father, fill me with Thy Spirit, that I may exalt Thy Son. Take hold of me as Thy instrument. Let me be pure. Let me be useful. May I look only to Thee ; trust only in Thee ; follow only Thee.” Amen.”

In all his Circuits Mr. Collins both won affection and gave it ; hence, separation, when it came, was always painful. He informs his sister :—“ I leave on Tuesday,

August 10th. Pray for me. It is a trying time for me, for my family, and for the people. If spared to enter another Circuit, I intend to be more determined, and to take higher ground for God than ever. But, 'Dust and ashes is my name.' Remember me at the throne; for, if God help me not, my vows will be but wind."

Review of Durham work rightly called for gratitude. He found nine hundred and nine members; and, although whole Societies had gone to a new Circuit, he left a thousand and sixteen. Hundreds had been saved; yet, in one so ardently longing for the good of his fellow-men, who wonders that it excited sorrow to think of thousands left unsaved? It has not been possible to exhibit upon these pages the success of which blessed evidence is yet extant. One diary records:—"In my round four persons found peace with God." It is next written:—"The Lord gave me two." Another entry is:—"This week, three; last week, six." And, again:—"J I—, A. W—, and J. H— were saved." These numbers and names, of course, recalled to Mr. Collins's mind the accompanying incidents of each conversion; but, if reproduced here in a manner so barely statistical, would read like columns of a spiritual register, and become wearisome by iteration. Much good, only thus summarily attested, cannot therefore be repeated. Where desire is large, it makes achievement seem small. Though thankful for trophies won, yet when setting his face towards his new Circuit, Mr. Collins's heart thrilled with dying Xavier's prayer:—" *Amplius, Domine, amplius!*" "More, Lord, more!"



## CHAPTER VIII.

### DUDLEY.

WITH his family, Mr. Collins left Durham on Tuesday, August 10th, 1841. They stayed at Derby that night, and reached Mrs. Graham's house at Clapham on the evening of Wednesday. On Friday, the 13th, accompanied by his sister, Mr. Collins went down to Kent. "My object," he says, "is to edify the brethren, and to win souls." Friends there had looked forward to this visit with special prayer for months. His first lodging was with Mr. Austen, one who loved him as only spiritual children can, and who habitually referred to him as his most trusted adviser. The wisdom with which Mr. Collins filled that office may be seen in the following letter, sent at a somewhat earlier date. It is a pattern of scrupulous regard for the honour of God, faithful dealing with conscience, prudent practical devotion, and profound religious attainment:—

Dear brother, thy strength is small; thou faintest in the day of adversity. Trials are physic; it is foolish to think the Physician cruel because the medicine is bitter.

I read in a story of old that a certain man buried his money, and then vilified his lord. You have done much the same.

Why this complaining? Your own hand tied the rod that whips you. You had fair opportunities for sale; hunger for larger profits seized you; you chose to keep your hops; prices have gone down; and, now, instead, as you ought, of blaming your own mismanagement and greed of gain, you dare to murmur against Providence. It is slander against Heaven. I know God as a Master. He is my Master. He is a good Master. I love Him as a Master. I leap for joy beneath His yoke. I kiss His cords and bands, and cannot bear to hear Him calumniated.

That evil thoughts of Him so easily should sway you, and for such slight and worldly causes, brings into grave doubt the heavenliness of your heart, and the spirituality of your aims. I once held

a service among some farmers of your county, who made no secret of their dislike of loud responses. I prayed, "Lord, save souls;" not a sympathetic breath was heard. It was a season of drought, so, in due course, I said, "Lord, send rain!" "Amen!" went in whispers round the place. "Lord, send rain!" "Amen!" was the audible reply. "LORD, SEND RAIN!" "AMEN!" thundered through the building. Devotion ended, I showed the dull fellows that it was manifest, when their heart was really stirred, they could say "Amen" as lustily as others. But how sad that men should care for fields more than for souls! Brother, have your desires thus grovelled? Has your "God bless me," only meant, "Give me hops, and corn, and cattle, and cash?"

Are you industrious for God? Inquire whether your very wish for revival be not indolence in disguise. Do you toil to bring good days, or only long to enjoy them? Do you ask, "What wouldst Thou have me to do?" Does your heart dance at the thought of undertaking some unusual, or hard, or extra work for Jesus?

Are you submissive and meek? You voluntarily entered into covenant; have you fallen out with its terms? Do you now object that the Lord should appoint you your lot? Do you dislike saying, "Thy will, O God, Thy will be done?"

You request my counsel: plainly, and in God's name, I will give it.

1. Arise, put on strength. Take Daniel's advice:—"Break off thy sins:"—short off;—all off;—clear off. You renounced the gin, now let the ale and porter go. That sacrifice for you is necessary: it will free your character from a peril, and strengthen your soul by a self-denial.

2. Avoid uncalled-for fellowship with the worldly. When Providence sends you among them, ask Jesus, and He will keep you company: but if of choice you consort with such, will it be wonderful if the devil and the ungodly trample you down?

3. Harshness of speech, and hardness of act, were of old your besetments. Remember, whenever you are now betrayed into them, that it is not enough, with suchlike sins, merely to confess them to God. Duty requires also that, so far as may be, the injury be repaired, and the feelings of the wounded solaced. We must be reconciled to our brother as well as offer upon the altar.

4. Spend half an hour a day in your room in secret with God. Practise abstinence on Friday; and that day remain with the Lord at least an hour.

5. Put first,—and keep first, every day and every hour,—the kingdom.

6. Get sanctified wholly. Your soul right, all else will be right. In perfect love your spirit will find a home, and live in an element where the world's attraction shall cease, and its cares trouble you no more to bear than do the hairs on your head.

Observe, I have here prescribed nothing for you which I have not practised myself. I have often lately seen the face of my Lord with unspeakable comfort. Losing self, selling all to buy Christ, I daily walk in the joy of purifying perfect love.

This communication was, as it ought to be, of great and lasting service to Mr. Austen. He was, through the remainder of life, a trustful, diligent, spiritual man.

On retiring to bed at Mr. Austen's house, Mr. Collins felt himself seriously unwell: he lay tossing about in pain for hours. "About three," he says, "betaking myself to prayer, I besought my good Lord to heal me, that I might do His work among the people. Ease came almost instantaneously. I dropped off to sleep, and awoke in the morning refreshed and well."

Saturday, August 14th.—We held a prayer-meeting at Mr. Austen's house. William Cox found mercy.

Sunday, 15th.—I preached in the morning at Sandhurst. One was saved. Afternoon and evening I preached at Hawkhurst. The enemy raged, but the power of the Lord was present to heal. A cursing Shimei—a miserable backslider—waited at the door to revile me. He had got his head full of some stupid story, which was refuted as easily, and amazed me as much, as the rumour of his own death which once reached Sammy Bardsley did him:—"Brother," said that simple-hearted man, "I never heard of it before. I do not think that there is a word of truth in it!" For matter and manner, my answer was much the same.

Monday, 16th.—Early in the morning I sought the Lord for a blessing on the day. It came. Under the sermons, and in the homes, many were affected. Henry Smith's daughter, and one of Mr. Roger's children, found the Lord.

Tuesday, 17th.—I preached twice at Staplecross. Young Trill entered into liberty. Another person having joyously proved the virtue of the cleansing blood, I asked of what Society he was. "O," he replied, "I am not one of you: I am a Bible Christian." Is it wise for a sect to assume as its own a title which belongs to every branch of the Protestant Church alike? Such a name fails to be distinctive; and is in sound, to say the least, discourteous.

Wednesday, 18th.—I preached at Northiam. Among the penitents, a young woman, who had been brought up a Socinian, was clearly saved, felt the peace of God which comes through receiving the atonement, and gave praise to Christ as "over all, God blessed for ever."

Thursday, 19th.—In the morning, Mrs. Austen's maid, Harriet, was set free. Willy Wenham, the servant man, had been very satirical about these conversions; but, as last night the convincing Spirit had shaken him, I called him early into my room. For a time his groans filled the house; but at length his sorrow turned into joy. At Ewhurst Green, I went to see Mrs. Piper, long imprisoned by lameness. As we prayed, the glory and beauty of the Lord were sweetly manifested unto us. All were in tears; but poor Mrs. Piper so trembled with emotion that the bed shook under her. My soul, remember that hour! S. Oliver drove me to Robertsbridge. As we

went, I pointed out house after house in which, of old, on that road I had held services. Those were happy days. I then sought souls continually; and, blessed be God, I do so still. Owing to intense heat, the evening meeting dragged heavily at first; but, ere we finished, the Lord drew near in saving power preciously.

Friday, 20th.—Souls were saved at Wadhurst. At my host's, a crazy boy seemed fired with most unaccountable fury against me. He used rough words, and kept up a dreadful din by beating the floor of his room, which was just over mine. Why was this? Had the devil, who did not like my errand there, any power over that poor mad brain? That I knew not: but I did know that lifting my heart to Christ could not in any case be wrong. I prayed therefore; and at once the wild creature became calm and still.

Saturday, 21st.—The Lord was with us at Kiln Down. Souls were saved.

Sunday, 22nd.—A triumphant day at Goudhurst. I preached three times. The distress of the mourners, and the joy of the saved, were unutterable.

Writing of this day to the Rev. James Harris, Mr. Collins says: In return for your Conference intelligence, I send you the better news that the Lord saved your brother yesterday. His distress was deep, and his deliverance clear. How many consciences found rest in Jesus, and how many hearts by His precious blood were made clean, I do not know; but the work equalled anything I ever saw."

A letter from Mr. H. Tompsett, referring to the same day, says:—"Mr. Collins lodged with me. We told him we wanted our three eldest children converted. 'Three eldest?' said he, 'why not all? My God says, 'Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.' I will not ask Him for less than all!' That large-hearted prayer was answered. All were given. One was saved in the chapel, and the other three at the family altar. Of those four, three already are landed in heaven."

"Monday, 23rd,—I preached at Rotherfield. Many from Tunbridge Wells were there. The shout of a king was in the camp, and the right hand of the Lord did valiantly.

"Tuesday, 24th.—Praising the Lord for this noble week, in which so many poor sinners have been brought to Jesus, and so many believers filled with perfect love, I returned to Clapham, and found my loved ones well.

"Thursday, 26th.—We left London at eleven, arrived at Birmingham at four, hired a coach and reached

Tipton at six. We found my predecessor still in the house in deep sorrow, and unable to vacate for us; his youngest child being far too ill to allow thought of removal."

The dear little creature died on the morning of the following Saturday. The funeral had to take place,—also necessary cleansings and repairs, delayed by the affliction, to be attended to,—ere the house could be open to its new occupants. Mr. Collins writes:—"It was, of course, inconvenient to us not to be able to unpack; but still more inconvenient for Mr. Cox, despite his own large family, to accept us all as guests. This, without a murmur, and with ready mind, was done at once. He and his were kindness itself. Their hospitality was most Christian. Nothing that thoughtful affection could suggest for our comfort was left undone."

"I never entered a Circuit where so many encouraging tokens showed themselves at once. The Spirit of supplication is poured out. Prayerful expectation prevails everywhere. Many hearts pant after holiness. All long for revival. It will come if we look for it, not to each other, but to God."

"Sunday, August 29th.—I preached in the morning at Dudley Port, from John xvii. 17: 'Sanctify them through Thy truth.' The people wept, I wept, and we were blessed together. In the afternoon I went to Oldbury, and preached from Mark xi. 22: 'Have faith in God.' The evening text, at the same place, was John xvi. 9: 'He shall convince the world of sin, because they believe not on Me.' God was great in the midst of us." During the week he preached at Dudley, Bloomfield, Dudley Wood, Mamble Square, and Horsley; and at each service was much encouraged.

On Tuesday, September 7th, Cornelius Mills much amused Mr. Collins, while describing some by-gone revival scene, by the grotesque, yet most graphic, picture of his father, which, without for a moment suspecting the relationship between them, Cornelius gave:—"A *mon* came over from *Brummagem*; he carried your name, I think. He was a lion. What a voice he had! How he did roar! When he shook his great head, he shook our hearts, I can tell you. I should like above all things to see that old *mon* again!"

“Thursday, 9th.—At Pensnett, Divine presence overshadowed us. Many were moved, and several saved. At the close of the meeting, a person came, took me by the hand, and asked, ‘Do you not know me?’ It was T. B——, but greatly altered. He has been much pinched; and, as he said, has known little but adversity since he left the old ship. He, with his wife, incline to embark in her once more. Three glass-blowers accompanied me toward home as far as Dudley. As we walked, one of them, a backslider, obtained anew the joy of salvation; the other two were enabled to trust God for His gift of entire holiness.

“Wednesday, 15th.—I preached at Woodside, from Heb. x. 12, 13. The Word was with power. I invited seekers to the communion rail. A poor blind boy groped his way there first; then his sister, weeping, followed; then their mother came and knelt between them. The two children obtained pardon, and the mother went home rejoicing with a clean heart. Others were similarly blessed. As we were separating, seeing a poor woman with very weebegone countenance, I stopped in the aisle to speak with her; she broke down, and her husband by her side literally groaned with agony. They were backsliders. That night they both set forth afresh.”

In a letter dated September 28th, Mr. Collins says:—“Matters improve here. Souls are brought to Christ every day. There are omens of a great work. Last Wednesday I preached at Darby Hand, from 1 John v. 9, 12. The first, in the prayer-meeting, that came to the communion rail was a rough navvy, a champion bruiser, whom none of the boxers of the neighbourhood dared to face. My Superintendent, Samuel Dunn, saw him standing one night by a bridge, and invited him to chapel. Years had passed since he had seen the inside of a sanctuary: feeling honoured that ‘the parson’ had asked him, he came, and continued to come. That night—with others, eight in all—God set him free.

“Yesterday was our Quarterly Meeting. We began our business at two. In the evening I preached from 1 Thess. v. 23, 24: ‘The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.’ After that, Mr. Dunn gave an exhortation. As he did so, a woman cried aloud for mercy. ‘Let us

pray,' said Brother Hickman. So he began, while Dunn, and I, and Father Gill sallied forth among the people. Sinners yielded on every hand. It was really fine. We could not break up until nearly eleven. About fifteen found mercy."

"Wednesday, September 29th.—At two o'clock this morning, I was roused from sleep by dreadful cries. I dressed hastily, went into the street, and found men stripped and fighting. The landlord of a miserable beer-house, having taken the last halfpenny, had then refused more drink; hence the quarrel with his drunken customers. I threw myself between them; and, with words of godly exhortation, soon broke up the riotous assembly. No harm befel me, beyond what soap and water would amend; my hands got reddened, but it was with blood from their wounds, not mine. In the evening I preached at Dudley Wood. We retired into the vestry for prayer. Seven mourners were made to rejoice in Christ.

"Thursday, 30th.—In the afternoon, visiting in Peacock's Buildings, I desired a woman to gather in her neighbours. Among them two came who were seeking the Saviour. They found Him in that cottage. As I approached Mamble Square, I heard two women quarrelling. Their oaths and hubbub soon quieted down at my word. O Lord, have mercy upon the ignorant poor of this district! As I went into the chapel, several, unaccustomed to worship, pleased that I had finished the fray, followed me. I preached about the Publican; and believe two went down, that night, to their houses justified."

Mr. Collins writes:—"The mental type of the inhabitants, and all their surroundings, are new to me. Special grace and special application alone can enable me to warn, feed, and guide this people aright." So gloriously, now-about, did the Lord pour out His Spirit that, for a season, even every week-night service has its record of conversions.

Sunday, October 3rd, was a day of grace in Dudley. A crowd heard the Word. The number of those who wished to remain to pray was such as quite to fill the body of the chapel. A vestry was appropriated to the use of mourners seeking counsel; it was thronged.

The names and addresses of not less than two and twenty were taken who that night were made happy in God.

Sunday, October 10th, 1841, will ever be dear to me. It was my earliest opportunity of enjoying the teaching of this beloved kinsman. His morning text in Tipton Chapel was Jer. xiii. 27, "Wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be?" Unction richer than was wont, even to him, came down. Such power I had never felt under any ministry, nor, after the lapse of these years, have I ever yet again experienced anything approaching to it. The Journal of the date beautifully says:—"There was such a shaking and such a cry, that I could not finish my sermon; it seemed as though every child of God would get his Father's image there and then." These simple words I will somewhat supplement." At the urging of the query: "'When shall it once be?' The loving Father says, 'Now;' what do you say?"—"Now" breathed audibly from pew to pew. "The Son who gave His cleansing blood says, 'Now;' what do you say?" At this reiteration of appeal, "*Now*," louder and more earnest, circled me in answer. "The waiting Sanctifier, the Spirit of Holiness, says, 'Now;' what do you say? when?" Twice the response, though it moved my inmost heart, had passed, leaving me, trained in the school of order, silent; but with that third questioning came a gush of influence irresistible. I could keep my lips no longer, but, like the rest, cried, "Now!" What is more, and better far, my soul, that blessed moment, as certainly said, "*Now*," as did my tongue. It was no flash of enthusiasm; it was a work of the Holy Ghost. Its force is still unexpended. That "*Now*" stirs me yet. Nor ever since that memorable time has my faith dared to procrastinate, or say anything but "*Now*" to all sanctifying offers of the promise-keeping God. As the Diary, in such simple words, indicates, the sermon was "swallowed up in victory." Seekers left their pews, and trooping, uncalled, up the aisles, knelt around the communion rail. Thus, unexpectedly, that morning service developed into a prayer-meeting—one of the most pleading and triumphant I ever knew. The whole day was in keeping with



its auspicious beginning. In the afternoon a lovefeast—yet precious in many a memory—was held. Under the evening sermon, feeling so over-tasked flesh that some fainted. Special miracles of grace were wrought. At that date the outlying “Black Country” population was rude and ignorant exceedingly. Doves, bulldogs, and fighting men, about equally attracted attention from the idlers of those parts. Drawn by curiosity to hear “the parson” that turned out of his warm bed to quell a quarrel, a noted pigeon-fancier, the crack trainer of the neighbourhood, was at the chapel. He had been accustomed to waste each holy Sabbath in whistling after his birds, and watching their flight. He did so no more; for that night brought him to the birth-hour of a new life. Nor was he alone; names of seventeen were added to the list of converts.

The Journal says:—“October 15th.—I walk in the light. My Father gives me to see both my work and my way. There is much to be done: but then I am strong to labour; have hold on the heart of the people; and feel that my key fits their lock. The work progresses. We have conversions continually. On Tuesday night we had six at Dudley Port; on Wednesday, seven at Woodside. One of them, a labourer from the fields, with black face, and frock tied over his shoulders, came weeping to the rail, nor would he go till Jesus blessed him. The baptism of fire descends on many. My brethren, and several of the Local Preachers also, hold similar meetings with good success. The revival will, I trust, be wider and longer than many here expect. All within me cries, ‘Onward, with the Ark!’”

“Tuesday, October 19th.—I called upon a sick woman at Horsley Field. While we were at prayer, Jesus set her daughter free. I went on to Oldbury, preached, and gathered fruit. Mrs. Tonge, wife of my host there, is great granddaughter to Mr. Wesley’s much beloved Grace Murray. While visiting among the friends, I saw good done. One widow’s heart was made to sing. As we joined in supplication, the Lord revealed Himself to both her children. From that happy group I passed on to see an aged paralytic, whose earnestness of love solemnly affected me. Any mention of Jesus seemed

thrill him. His tears were wonderful. Upon my remarking them, he said, 'It refreshes me to weep; I am always happiest when the tears *bowl out*.' The old man charged me to tell the people at Darby Hand—whither I was going—how great things the Lord had done for him.

"Friday, October 22nd.—Blessed Father, I want to come to Thee this day. Thou art working. That I may work with Thee, bring me near to Thee. Everlasting Good, Portion of my soul, my own God, dwell in me. Dwell in me as the holy God,—the mighty God,—the wise God. Take hold of me: take hold of me more strongly than Thou ever didst before. O my God, I am Thine. Here I am; serve Thyself of me; put Thy hand upon Thine instrument. May I live by Thee, for Thee. Amen."

A letter dated October 26th says:—"I am in the thick of harvest. So grand a work of God as I am now in the midst of I never saw. My heart leaps at a review of every week's meetings. No sermons now without seals. On Sunday last, two women walked miles to be present, and, when they approached the table to partake of the Holy Communion, were so filled with contrition that their sobs and cries rang through the place. There, to them, as to disciples of old, Jesus made Himself known in 'the breaking of bread.' Last night I preached in Dudley, upon holiness. Such a congregation nobody ever saw there before at an ordinary week-night service. As the people seemed wonderfully to drink in the Word, I requested them to gather for prayer into the large school-room beneath. All seemed subdued. Such a cry for mercy I have seldom heard. Numbers found Christ. How many, I cannot tell; but among them was one poor prostitute from the streets. Glory to God for that! That melts my heart! Altogether, the scene last night was one of the most astonishing displays of saving grace that I ever witnessed."

"Thursday, October 28th.—J. C., the young Minister from Castle-Donington, called upon me. While in my study, I urged the duty of having his heart so cleansed, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that

he might perfectly love God and worthily magnify His name. "How blessed that state!" said he: "I wish I enjoyed it." "Why not enter now?" "I must seek it." "Did you not, as a candidate, assure the District Meeting, years ago, that you were earnestly seeking it?" "I did; but from this time I really will pray for it." "Have you not prayed for it before?" "Well, yes, I have." "See, then, another further thing is wanting. Let Jesus teach you what it is in those gracious words, Mark xi. 24: 'Whatsoever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive, and ye shall have.' Here are three steps: you have only taken two, and, hence, have come short of success. Observe, there must be holy desire;—the desire must be uttered in petition;—and then, at once, the word, and might, and heart of God must be trusted. 'Believe that ye receive.' The young man promised me that he would do this. I love to press my young brethren upon this point. Perfect love in a preacher's heart is the best possible guarantee of success in his work.

"Friday, October 29th.—Crowds of souls surround me, dull and dead, yet in terrible danger. O Father, awaken them. Thou gavest Thy Son for them, give Thy grace to them. Fill me with Thyself, O my Father. It will be a glorious condescension in Thee thus to stoop to me, poor wretch, with Thy glory; it will agree with the wondrous propensions of Thy heart to show this unspeakable kindness unto me, all unworthy, but whom yet it pleaseth Thee to love; in it, Thy grace will join hands with Thy Providence; for such a fulness, and that alone, can enable me to accomplish the work unto which Thou hast called me. My hungry soul cries, 'Fill, O fill me, Father!' Thy truth hath promised. I wait, believing Thy faithful word."

Monday, November 1st, was the Anniversary of the Tipton Tract Society. Fifteen persons had attested, in the service of the night before, that they then and there trusted the Saviour. Expecting a choice opportunity of confirming such in the faith, Mr. Collins resorted to the tea-meeting. The Pastor, confronted by fiddles, and flutes, and such like apparatus, found his opportunity much curtailed, if not absolutely filched,

away. He writes :—"The singers had prepared a number of pieces and anthems. As they must either sing or be sulky, we let them sing, and so with small result the precious time was consumed. It taught me that, in future, I must vigilantly investigate all arrangements for the conduct of such meetings before the time for holding them comes."

Luther says, "Satan does not like music." I believe he did not like "Brother Martin's;" but music—as mere music—he has little reason to be displeased with. In not a few places the arch foe has found the choir door very open to him. Methodists cannot yet spare the petition of their early hymn :—

The secret pride, the subtle sin,  
O, let it never more steal in,  
To offend Thy glorious eyes;  
To desecrate our hallow'd strain,  
And make our solemn service vain,  
And mar our sacrifice.  
Still let us on our guard be found,  
And watch against the power of sound  
With sacred jealousy :  
Lest, haply, sense should damp our zeal,  
And music's charms bewitch and steal  
Our hearts away from Thee.

The choristers pew often usurps the service which it ought but to lead. By constant change, and fugue, and cunning harmony, it condemns untrained people to silence, and, at the best, shuts praise up in the organ loft. What at the worst? Why, it turns praise out of doors. Art supplants devotion. Skill becomes everything: piety, nothing. The very heavenliest part of worship is thenceforth transmuted into a performance: professionals *do* what loving hearts should *offer*. Chorus, quartet, trio, solo,—all is vain. It is just "a very good song, and very well sung." Such singing may make a church—as it would a theatre—popular, but will neither please God at all, nor, despite the *dictum* of Luther, drive the devil an inch.

On Wednesday, November 3rd, Mr. Collins wrote thus to me :—"I rejoice that you begin to realise success. Never be content without it. If the promises be true, we may have it. If we may, shall we not?"

In order to preach so as to bring down blessing, you must come down. Christ must be all. Self and sin must be out of the way. Do not think to accomplish anything by clangour of words, or by attitudinizing. Get your sermon preparation well done before the Sabbath; turn into bed in good time on Saturday night, and out of it early on Sunday morning. Get three hours with God before you go to the pulpit; get at Him by reading, believing, and praying over His book. Talk with Him till He talks with you, and says:—‘Go, in this thy strength.’ Then go, full of humility and tenderness, and you will have power. Do not clack of success to every little Methodist you meet. Keep the cork in your bottle, if you would have strength in your wine. As to study, calculate your time, prize it, consecrate it, apportion it. Every man can best form his own plan. Do not aim at too much at once. Let your scheme be simple and easy to be practised. Remember, the master rule of all is:—‘Stick to it.’ But whatever else you do, deal much with God. People say, ‘This man has talent,’ and, ‘That man has talent;’ depend upon it, the great secret of usefulness is close dealing with God.”

After writing thus, Mr. Collins went to Gornal Wood, where he preached; and, that he might have opportunity of visitation, remained in a very humble cot all night. In the morning, this earnest evangelist set himself to hunt after souls from house to house; and had reason to believe that, at least, one poor sick man received comfort in Christ. Thus, witnessing for his Master in the roadside homes, as he went, he worked his way to Pensnett, dined, and then, getting the key of the chapel, locked himself in, spending from half-past three until five alone with God. He writes:—“The Lord strengthened my soul; assured me of help for the evening; and revealed Himself as my Good, my Portion, my All.” The evening service was glorious. Eight persons appear to have obeyed the truth by believing it to the joy of their souls. Incessant walking, preaching, praying, talking, had made the day one of excessive toil. At length, late and weary, yet full of bliss, he reached his home.

Sunday, November 7th.—Good was done at Oldbury; but good there is much hindered by the prevalence of evil-speaking. Harsh judgments, tale-bearing, and mischief-making, grieve the Spirit and impede the work.

Monday, November 8th.—Robert Newton preached at Great-bridge. My soul was refreshed while he showed how “the Spirit and the Bride say, Come.”

Friday, November 19th.—I went to the Bloomfield prayer-meeting. One J. A. was there. I knew nothing of him, but felt drawn to go and speak to him. Almost at a word he began to tremble and weep. I observed that our Leaders seemed shy of him. None came to speak with him until I called them. The fact was, he was known to them as such an “awful rough” that they feared him. His wife, a member, had long prayed for him, and long suffered much from him. He was a great boxer, and a notorious blackguard. So anxious for a fray had he been, that, but a short time before, he had given a Darlaston man two quarts of ale to fight him. Lured by the price, the stranger fell to the work so lustily, that he gave the poor fool, as he well deserved, a terrible beating. But this night my Lord smote him harder still, broke his heart, and then healed him. Hallelujah!

Saturday, November 20th.—Mr. Cox and Mr. Dixon were with me when J. P., a poor glassblower from Dudley, who had been notoriously wicked, came in to tell me how the Lord had blessed him. “But,” said I, “you see two gentlemen are here; can you tell it before them?” Ay, Sir, with pleasure, if, instead of two, there were two thousand.” “Go on then.” “You see, somehow I came to chapel; and as I had been a very bad fellow, the preaching *punished* me. I felt very cut up. I heard that there was to be some sort of a meeting at Tipton; so I set off there. When I got to the door, I found that it was a lovefeast; that I could not get in without a ticket; and that it had already been going on for an hour. I felt disappointed at being shut out. Just then you, who had been at Bloomfield preaching, walked into the vestry. I followed. I don’t think you saw me; for, leaning back in the chair, you cried. ‘Glo—ry!’ I never heard such a ‘Glory’ before: and your face looked as if heaven were shining through it, while I felt miserable as hell. I waited a minute, and then asked for a note of admission. You said, ‘Behind time, friend. Mind you are not too late at last. No tickets can be got there when once the door is shut.’ That hit me very hard. From then till last Sunday I carried—what is not easy to carry—an aching heart. In a prayer-meeting at Dudley chapel, one desired me to take my place among the penitents. I refused. A second came: but I would not. Another entreated me: I replied, ‘Well, this is the third time of asking; I will go.’ I went, and bent one knee.”—Here the man seemed somehow to have got impregnated with Sammy Hick’s idea, who asked, “Did you ever know a man saved on one knee?”—“The Lord would have me lower than that: so, at last, I went right down, and mercy soon lifted me right up. I have been blessing the Lord ever since; but, last night, as I could not sleep for praising, it struck me that I ought to come and tell you. I turned out at three to do so; but felt

it would be too bad to disturb you so soon. However, now, here I am, bless the Lord! a happy man at last."

This man continued steadfast. Months after, his wife said to Mr. Collins, "What a blessed change this is in my husband! He used to blaspheme God and abuse me continually; but now he is full of love and praise like an angel!"

A letter to Mr. Austen, dated November 23rd, 1841, furnishes a good specimen of Mr. Collins's parlour work. "Your wife and friends are making the best possible preparation for my visit. Folk about here are for anthems and music. I like your prayers and fastings better; and so does my Master. God bless you all. Last Sunday a gentleman came with his gig to fetch me to Brierley Hill. As we went, I asked, 'Are you happy in God?' 'No.' 'Are you a Methodist?' 'No.' 'How came you to fetch me?' 'O,' said he, 'the Methodists often make use of me.' I told him that I thanked him for letting the Methodists have his gig; but for all that must claim from him that he let the Lord have his heart. At dinner, he besought me not to feel offended by his leaving at the end of the sermon; he was so nervous that, really, he could not bear the noise of the prayer-meeting. After preaching, Mr. P. and this nervous man came in to tea. I asked P., 'Are you happy?' 'No.' 'Do you wish to be?' 'Yes.' 'When? now, or seven years to come?' 'Indeed, I hope it will not be seven years first.' 'Well, then, let us seek it of God now.' At the word we fell to prayer. The men wrestled; the servant wept; and the daughters, two sweet young maidens, sobbed as they knelt at the sofa. It was a boisterous time; but in less than half an hour P., the nervous man, and the girls, were all rejoicing together. The presence of the Lord went with us to chapel: several were saved there. Then mercy visited the house again. An unsaved son, affected by the happy witness of those blessed in the afternoon, began to weep. Seeing that, we deferred supper for prayer; he and Phœbe the servant were both made glad in God. I retired, had a gracious night's rest, and awoke with the sweetness of God upon my spirit."

Sunday, November 28th, was spent in the Wednesbury Circuit in behalf of Missions. The congregations were crowds, and the collections double those of the foregoing year. Rumour had carried before him fame of the unction which so commonly gave success to his ministry. Praying people and troubled souls naturally, therefore, resorted to the service. As he was commencing the customary intercession meeting after sermon, he saw a number of persons so standing as to block the approaches to the Communion rail, around which his manner was to gather inquirers. His request, that these, by retiring, should leave the way of access open for penitent seekers, was met unexpectedly, but happily, by the assurance that they themselves *were penitent seekers*, waiting only his earliest invitation at once to place themselves in order about him. A large harvest was easily gathered where all were so prepared and so expectant.

The next day Mills, a collier, went home heart-smitten from a service held in Tividale. Very miserable, and very ignorant, the poor fellow knew not what to do. He got up into his chamber. Framing prayers was new work to him. An odd fancy struck his troubled brain:—if he could but read, “Lord Jesus Christ,” in the New Testament, he should be saved. Moved by this strange form of faith in that name, he set to work. If he ever had learned his alphabet, the acquirement had well-nigh passed away, for his sad scholarship, try as he might, carried him no further than, L, O, R, D, Lord. The ill omen—that he could not find Jesus on the page—led him in agony of soul to seek Him in prayer. The trick of Bibliomancy failed, but the way of prayer—as of old—succeeded; in the quiet of that room his heart was set free.

Monday, December 6th, Mr. Collins preached at Dudley a most memorable sermon to backsliders, from Jonah ii. 4: “I said, I am cast out of Thy sight; yet I will look again toward Thy holy temple.” It was ascertained that more than twenty were by that service reclaimed.

At Woodside, on Wednesday, December 8th, information was given of the triumphant end of Margaret Reynolds, a recent convert. After finding peace with



God at a prayer-meeting, her whole conduct had been changed. Her persuasions won her husband to the sanctuary. She set at once upon the work of Sabbath-school teaching and tract distribution. The course was scarcely entered ere the race was run. She was taken ill on Sunday, November 28th, and before the close of Tuesday, 30th, passed away to heaven, shouting, "Glory! glory! glory!"

Meeting a class for tickets, Mr. Collins found Jane Gill anxiously longing for "a heart in every thought renewed, and full of love Divine." He opened for her the way of faith. "Are you a child of God?" "Yes?" "Are you not, as a child of God, an heir of God?" "Yes?" "Have you not, as such, a gracious and assured right unto eternal glory?" "Yes." "Does not right unto eternal glory necessarily include right unto everything without which that glory may not be entered?" "Yes." "Is not holiness such a thing?" "Yes." "Have you not then a right unto that?" "Yes," "Well, will you then claim your right? It only waits your claim." They fell to prayer. The claim was urged, and Heaven admitted it.

We may profitably append to the record of this conversation an extract from a letter to Mrs. Austen upon the same theme:—"Faith brings love, and works by love. Would you be holy? Know then that love in the heart is holiness in the root. Let that Divine principle be received, cherished, and exemplified, and the character you seek is yours. In seeking perfect love your business is with God and His promises. 2 Peter i. 4: 'There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature.'

"Look to the hills. Have to do with God. 'Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves.'

I cannot wash my heart,  
But by believing Thee,  
And waiting for Thy blood to impart  
The spotless purity.

Neither you, nor I, have ever made all the use we might of these precious, precious promises. Jesus prays:—"Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth."

‘I found Thy words,’ says the prophet, ‘and did eat them; they are the joy and rejoicing of my heart.’ Let us join in that feast. Let us take in the Lord’s words by faith; so shall we evermore rejoice.

“Your constitutional bias, my sister, leads you to attend to some religious exercises to the neglect of others. To you, it is more easy to reproach yourself than to honour your God; to pray and to confess, than to believe moment by moment for full salvation; to mourn, than to rejoice; to look down upon the sin of your life, and the wretchedness of your nature, rather than to ‘behold the Lamb’ that taketh away your sin and the sin of the world. Deny yourself in this. Does it sound strangely to you, that, calling you from fear to faith, from mourning to joy, I should say, Deny yourself? Yes,—though you have never so seen it,—this perpetual wailing comes not of heaven-born lowliness, but of unbelieving self. Henceforth, give happy credence to the words of your Father. Deny that sinking heart of yours. Deny it when it would doubt as sternly as when it would do wickedly. Let it no more have its own sad way. By doubting it dishonours God; and then, forsooth, calls its miserable lack of trust, ‘humility!’

“O, stir up yourself! ‘Fight, the good fight of faith. Lay hold on eternal life.’ Of eternal life holiness is the very essence. ‘God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.’ Make not Him who hath said this a liar. ‘Dare to believe;’ so shall you ‘on Christ lay hold:’ continue believing; so shall you continue receiving.”

The returns at the Quarterly Meeting held at Dudley, Monday, December 27th, showed an increase of seventy members, with two hundred and fifty on trial.

The Journal of December 29th says:—“I met with Mrs. Allington, who was at Madeley when Mrs. Fletcher was brought there as a bride; she saw the people throw flowers into the coach as it drew up to the vicarage. It was her happiness to be, soon after, received into Mr. Fletcher’s family as a servant. It appears that public prayers and preachings could not content his earnest soul. His habit was to gather his

neighbours frequently into his house for exhortation. In these services his speech was very informal and free. He wisely imitated the Master in using illustrations that lay next him, and did not disdain kitchen allusions in kitchen sermons. Thus once, without much break in his colloquial homily, he removed a crackling bat from the fire, and, as he stood with the tongs still in his hand, said:—‘O that I could as easily pluck sin out of all your hearts.’ Mrs. Allington listened to the holy man’s last discourse, and heard the bell toll for his funeral. She was nigh at hand, reaping at the time; and says she wept bitterly because the farmer, in whose employ she wrought, would not let her leave the harvest-field to be at church.

Lured by old love, though the weather was unusually severe, Mr. Collins, early in January, 1842, set forth to anniversary services in Kent. Foreseeing the freezing which coach-top travel threatened him with, he wrote:—“Meet me at Flimwell with a good horse; for I shall be very cold, and want to fly to your comfortable fire.” Doubtless, the horse was, as was requested, a good one; but the age and infirmity of the gig led to some gymnastic exercises not set down in the programme, and most unexpected by the performers. Beneath the double trial of a well-to-do farmer and a weighty divine, as they were proceeding at a swinging trot, the axletree broke. With much more than common celerity of movement, out shot the farmer, and over him Mr. Collins. What, however, with the friendly buffer beneath, and the cushion of snow, a good yard thick, no harm came of it. They had just released their horse from the wreck when, the Rye mail opportunely arriving, Mr. Collins mounted the box; while the worthy yeoman, leaving the ruins of the gig to their fate on the road, mounted the horse. Safely, though in diverse fashion, both at length reached the hospitable home. After two happy days, such as seemed prescriptive among his Sandhurst children and associates, Mr. Collins returned to the arduous toil that lay unceasingly before him in the Dudley Circuit.

The next Sunday was a glorious day. Observing in the prayer-meeting a roughly clad labourer evidently struggling to conceal unconquerable emotion, Mr. Collins

made towards him. At the first syllable the scared man bolted from the seat to the door. The preacher thought such a prize should not be lost for lack of a chase. He says:—"I saw that my Master's hand was on him; that the devil very much wished to get him away; and that there was no time for parley. Under the circumstances I made no scruple of apprehending the fugitive in the name of the Lord. Poor fellow, he was stricken through; strength to resist he had none; he had scarcely strength to come. However, when once safely deposited at the communion rail, he fell earnestly to prayer. By-and-bye, the love of God was shed abroad in his heart; then, first thing, he ran to me, threw his arms around my neck, and, before all the people, embraced me like a brother. He blessed God, and thanked me, for not letting him escape."

The unpreparedness of poor colliers amid their imminent perils much affected Mr. Collins. Among his papers, within a few months, I find death notices of Richard Griffiths, William James, Arthur Roberts, James Fisher, George Allen, James Pearson, Richard Spicer, Thomas Peters, and James Naylor. All these were killed in neighbouring pits. Of course, while mortal accidents were numerous, slighter ones were much more so. Some hairbreadth escapes are registered; *e. g.*:—"Sunday, January 29th, I visited Isaac Atwood. As he was at work, last week, an immense quantity of coal came suddenly crashing down. There was no chance for flight. Most mercifully, two huge pieces fell together rafterwise, making a roof over him strong enough to resist the pressure of tons that else would have crushed every bone in his skin. With much fright, but whole limbs and only a few bruises, he happily escaped."

How strangely small the dint of moral impression left by death! Miners, mariners, and soldiers, though so much in danger, are seldom thoughtful. As two drunken colliers were staggering home, one reeled into the shaft of an old worked-out pit, and miserably perished; the other—alas! a type of thousands—stayed not in his path of sin one moment because of that alarming and monitory fact. He drank, he blasphemed, he fought, he beat

his wife, just as before. Returning from his toil on Tuesday, February 18th, more for a rest than a sermon, the poor sinner turned into Bloomfield chapel. That night salvation came. Thenceforth the brute was a man, a kind husband, a quiet neighbour, a doer of good, a follower of Christ.

Moved with compassion for the crowd of neglected, sinful, sensual, low-sunk pitmen around him, Mr. Collins determined upon a special service for their benefit. To his friends he wrote :—" Pray for my poor colliers."

Friday, February 11th, was spent in fasting and special prayer in their behalf. During those hours of wrestling, his desire grew intense, and his faith venturesome. His whole spirit breathed itself in one definite, reiterated cry which swallowed up every other petition :—" A hundred souls ! Lord, give me and my brethren next week, in this Circuit, a hundred souls ! It is little for Thee. O Thou, who didst in one day at Pentecost save three thousand, give us next week a hundred souls !" On Sabbath morning, five o'clock found him again in the closet, urging the same plea. What wonder that when one so prepared went up to the sanctuary, the congregation should find that they had among them a man full charged with heavenly power ? In the first prayer, the gush of emotion mastered utterance ; but the Minister's falling tears, trembling tones, stammered words, and involuntary pauses, thrilled responsively every heart in the house. Strong men bowed and sobbed, and the whole congregation melted before the Lord. " The Gospel " was that morning visibly " the power of God unto salvation." The evening sermon had been advertised as an address to colliers. Hundreds, little accustomed to chapel-going, swarmed thither. Every inch of space was packed, and numbers had to return from the door unable to get in. The text was Luke xiii. 4, 5 : " Those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem ? I tell you, Nay : but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." A sermon more suitable to the class for whom it was designed—very ignorant, very hard, very wicked, very much in peril—could not have been preached.

After very clearly and effectively setting forth the doctrine, and urging the duty, of repentance, he proceeds, in the close, to the inquiry, "What is it to perish?" He shows that, when applied to things capable of doing so, the phrase signifies loss of existence. Thus, Psalm xlix. 20, speaks of "the beasts that perish;" 1 Peter i. 7, also, of "gold that perisheth." When used in relation to this mortal life, it means the termination of it through neglect, in circumstances of great suddenness or misery. In such sense, "the righteous" may "perish." Battle and accident, famine and pestilence, come even unto them; but then the body only has perished, nor even that without hope; it will not lie in wreck for ever.

To the Saviour's hearers, "*likewise* perish" uttered prophetic warning of Roman swords, which soon should smite; and of falling city walls, which soon should crush that Christ-rejecting people; bringing doom to them in the very modes prefigured by Pilate's slaughter of the Galileans, and by the crash of the Siloam tower, which had slain the men of Jerusalem.

That allusion to the fatal siege was, however, but of temporary use, not to be forgotten in exposition of the Saviour's words, considered as a spoken discourse; but as the terms lie on the New Testament page, parts of the abiding Word, warning men of all time, that temporary sense merges into the larger, terrible, everlasting idea expressed, 2 Peter iii. 7, in the phrase, "Perdition of ungodly men." Compare John x. 28: "My sheep shall never *perish*." 1 Cor. i. 18: "The preaching of the cross is to them that *perish* foolishness." And 2 Peter iii. 9: "The Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should *perish*, but that all should come to repentance."

To see what this perdition is, Mr. Collins said,—

You must look further than that room where, scarcely cold, lies the spirit-forsaken body; where stands the band of weeping friends. Follow the soul. It is the soul that has perished. For that perished soul the Intercessor no more lifts up his hand; towards that soul the face of God settles into unchangeable frown. Gloom, like that of midnight, falls around, just cleaved by one passing ray,—the last shimmer of the bright wings of the departing angel, who lingered by the sinner in ministry of mercy till the expiry of his latest breath.

"O," shrieks the affrighted soul, "for one Sabbath, one hour, one hope, one offer more!" Memory recalls ten thousand squandered opportunities; Judgment presents a host of reasons why they should have been embraced; Despair sighs out, "Too late! Too late!"—its doleful requiem; Conscience grasps its whip of scorpions. Hell begins.

What words can utter, or what wail express, the horrors of a soul in Hell? Hell, that "*wine-press*" in which the Almighty crushes down His foes! Hell, that "*lake of fire*," where all that do wickedly shall welter in molten billows, that rise and roll, blown into ceaseless tempest by the "wrath of God!" Hell, that "*bottomless pit*" where every deep hath yet a lower deep, and wretches lost sink, and sink, and sink for ever!

But what dark forms are these, whose black outline makes the midnight pale? How the hollow laugh of that infernal band, as it approaches, mocks the terror-smitten, ruined soul! They are demons, who have practised hating till their very being is malignity.

O sinner, if thou be lost, devils, all malice, all unrestrained, will gather round thy perished soul, as vultures do around a carcase. Thou wilt be their prey. Thee they will pursue. Thee they will tear. They will coil round thy heart like serpents. They will sting thee like adders.

Evil-doer, weigh well the solemn words written concerning Achan, Josh. xxii. 20: "That man perished not alone in his iniquity." Who ever did? There, all ruined by thee will meet thee. After carousal comes quarrel; when the store is spent, the feast ends in a fray. There—all the jollity of sin over, all rejoicing done—the seducer and his victim, the deceiver and his dupe, the tyrant and the oppressed, the murderer and the slain, confront each other. What a meeting! What reproaches! What rage! What endless strife!

In sickness there is hope of recovery; in prison of liberty; in exile of return; but hope is dead in Hell, each horror is "for ever." The sinner's *mittimus* says "Eternity." "Eternity" is graven on the gates, and written on the walls. "Eternity" is the taunt of the tormentors. Every burning wind howls out, "Eternity;" every hollow cave echoes back, "Eternity."

O sinners, flee, while ye may, to Jesus. Flee from "the wrath to come." Could you count the stars of the sky, and the rays of the light, and the leaves of the forest, and the blades of the grass, and the drops of the deep, and the sands of the shore, your huge arithmetic, when ended, would have failed to reach the smallest fraction of the measureless Eternity through which, "except ye repent, ye must all likewise perish."

Thus loudly did this vigilant watchman blow the trumpet of alarm; thus strongly did he warn the people; thus without abatement did he tell the wicked his message from God. The scenes which followed these terrible thunder peals are not easy to describe. Cries for mercy rose in all directions. Here, a child of pious parents;

—there, a chapel-going moralist ;—yonder, a backslider. Here, an ignorant collier ;—there, a fire-tanned puddler ;—yonder, a burly navvy. But not only sons of toil, sons of shame were weeping there. The very riff-raff of society, blacklegs, drunkards, and fighting men, lay smitten at His dear feet, whose might alone can “gather such outcasts in, and save from sin and Satan’s power.” Hours passed in prayer. Forty-two new witnesses of grace were registered. All through the week the impulse continued ; souls were saved every day, and, at its close, Mr. Collins triumphantly records :—“I have no doubt that *the hundred* has been given to us.”

“Saturday, February 26th.—I went to Lawley, in the Madeley Circuit. The next morning, beginning at five, I spent three sweet hours with my God. In the services Divine power accompanied the Word. Nineteen persons at night were enabled to exercise present trust in Christ for His mercy.

“Monday, February 28th.—I visited Madeley, and saw Mr. Smith, one of Mr. Fletcher’s catechumens. He, with other young men, was ringing the bells, one Saturday evening, when Mr. Fletcher came over to the church and asked them to desist, as in those hours of preparation for Lord’s day work he desired and needed quiet. ‘But,’ said he, ‘I should be sorry to diminish your enjoyment, so come with me ; perhaps I can give you equal pleasure, with more profit.’ He led them to his study, allowed each to choose a book, and, upon condition that, after reading, each should tell him their thoughts upon its contents, permitted them to carry it home.

“While walking from preaching appointments, Mr. Fletcher always regaled his companions with profitable talk, interspersed with frequent incident. One, Mr. Smith remembered. A wealthy person being summoned before a magistrate for profanity, replied to the charge, that he ‘only swore as a gentleman.’ The magistrate answered, ‘You could not swear as a gentleman ; swearing is utterly ungentlemanly ; and that you, being a gentleman, should do such a thing, greatly aggravates the offence. The station Providence permits you to occupy renders the fault more inexcusable in yourself, and the example more mischievous to others. Sir, I fine



you the last farthing the law will allow.' Mr. Fletcher said. 'Such a decision did honour to the bench;' and added, 'If all magistrates were like-minded, evil speech would soon be shamed out of the land.'

"The men in the parish who fattened on their neighbours' drunkenness, as was likely, both hated and dreaded their clergyman. A publican was one day boasting defiance of 'the Methodist Parson' to Mr. Smith's father. On the instant, unexpectedly, Mr. Fletcher turned a corner, and was seen approaching. At the sight, the pot-house hero quailed at once, bid his company good-bye, and, with all his valour, took to his heels rather than face the saintly Vicar.

"I went to the good man's tomb; it bears the names of Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, and also of Sally Lawrence, their adopted daughter. I then called upon Miss Tooth, who well remembered my father's visit to Mrs. Fletcher; she showed me a number of interesting things, especially numerous books much marked with margin notes by Mr. Fletcher.

"In the evening I preached in the chapel from Deut. xxxiii. 26. It was a time of blessed sanctifying grace."

Home sorrow awaited Mr. Collins upon his return from Madeley. He writes: "My dear little girls were both ill. Emmy suffered from catarrh, and was in agonies of earache. Perilous inflammation of the lungs caused us anxiety about Maria." By the time the daughters recovered, unwearied attention, night-watching, and maternal solicitude, brought low the feeble power of their mamma. Affliction went the round of the house; for Mr. Collins himself was next prostrated. His strength was great, but, in his Master's work, he was spendthrift of energy; often overdone, he was at length fairly felled. It came thus: on Easter Sunday he preached at Burslem on behalf of Missions. The chapel was large, but the congregation seemed slow to respond, and the church low in spiritual life. Bent upon victory, his exertions were intense and great. Fifteen seals were given to his ministry there; but the meeting was protracted and exhausting. Midnight came before he could retire to rest. He was compelled to set off early in the morning,

ere half recruited, in order to be present in the Dudley Quarterly Meeting at two o'clock. Of the journey, the part of it between Wolverhampton and Dudley, nearly six miles, he was obliged to walk. God's work had prospered. The increase declared for the three months was one hundred members, with two hundred on trial; yet, though numbers were up and funds in hand, such disturbing causes existed as made the meeting to be one of great excitement. At the close of stormy discussions he had to preach. Who can wonder that, at the end of such a Monday, after such a Sunday, he reached Tipton jaded and borne down by accumulated toil? Bilious headache, accompanied with alternate fits of shivering and burning, came on. He writes:—"Cousin Samuel Coley came over and helped me for a week." It would have been more truly written that he helped me for a life. I had never before seen holiness so perfect, beautiful, and impressive in a living type. Affliction chastened his sometime rugged might into gentleness, and his conversations with me upon purity of heart were melting and profound. The memory of them is a wealth to me yet. The Diary of the first Friday of convalescence reads:—"I thank the Lord, who has kindly made my body better: I thank Him more for giving me His comfortable presence when I was almost too weak to ask it. This day, O God, I desire to get a clear understanding of the relations between Thee and me. I am Thine, and Thou art mine. I withhold nothing from Thee. Lying at Thy feet, in an act of dedication, I yield my entire being afresh unto Thee."

No sooner strengthened to be again at work, than records of success recommence. One night, a boy ran home with a better "Eureka" than that of Archimedes. Going to the foot of the stairs, unable to keep his joyful secret longer, he shouted, "Mother, dear mother! I have found Christ! I have found Christ!" Sweet simplicity! Precious news for a praying parent! Many a godly family that year was similarly gladdened.

"The other day," says Mr. Collins, "Sandy Henderson wrote me from Caithness, and told me how a man in his neighbourhood, George Campbell by name, got into

concern about his soul. His ignorant friends, thinking him lunatic, bound him with cords. Sandy, hearing of his case, went and told him of Jesus. While he talked and prayed, the poor creature's heart, set free, leaped for joy. As there really seemed no cause for alarm in the happy man's doxologies, his family ventured to untie the knots; and, if love of the Saviour—the world's old sign of madness—be insufficient proof of insanity, then the rescued prisoner must be acquitted of the charge, for never since has he given any other."

Monday, April 18th, Mr. A., of Burslem, brought by business to Wolverhampton, could not deny himself the pleasure of an interview with the Minister whose word had been blessed to the salvation of his soul. He therefore hired a gig, and drove over to Tipton. Finding that Mr. Collins had gone away to a meeting at Dudley, with persevering love he made after him there. His first salutation was, "Sir, I am one of your spiritual children." From him Mr. Collins joyfully learned that much more good than he had known of came of the hard labours of Easter Day. God had then shaken many who had since ventured to come out of their corners. This man, his wife, his servant, and his employer, had all since that time entered into the joy of faith. In fact, conversions, fruits of that impulse, had occurred on every subsequent Sabbath.

Tuesday, May 3rd.—Mr. Collins says, "I called a prayer-meeting after preaching; the first I have held after a week-night service since my illness. I think myself strong enough now to recommence that useful plan. Going home without it, I feel like a sportsman who has shot at the birds, *but not stopped to bag the game.*"

Wednesday, May 11th.—My wife's brother came to see us. He is, just now, building and endowing a church, near his mansion in Cumberland. While thus thorough and true as a Churchman, he is very catholic in spirit, and specially friendly to the Methodists. Both himself and Mrs. Graham seemed much delighted with the grounds and ruins of Dudley Castle; and also took great interest in all the processes of making and working iron. On Friday they left, to spend a while with Lady Carnegie, at Leamington, before going on to Clapham.

Wednesday, May 25th.—G. H., a recent convert died at Oldbury. His last act was to sing the hymn commencing;—

What are these array'd in white,  
Brighter than the noonday sun,  
Foremost of the Sons of Light,  
Nearest the eternal throne ?

Surely a dying saint anticipating heaven in song is a lovely sight.

Monday, May 30th.—While I was giving tickets, a maiden, a member of the class, had a singular seizure ; she fell into a trance-like sort of state ; she suffered nothing, but perfectly oblivious of all around, sang correctly, in a low sweet voice, the popular hymn, “ I love Jesus.” In half an hour, quite ignorant of what she had been doing, she opened her eyes and was conscious as usual.

Tuesday, May 31st, Mr. Collins wrote to his youngest sister :—“ Thank God for your good meetings. Persevere, and the Lord will perfect that which concerneth you ; ~~then~~ religion will become the habit and happiness of your life ; you will dwell in God, and God will dwell in you. In your busy seasons avoid hurry of manner, if you would keep from flutter of spirit. Nothing gives calm like committing all to God in prayer. Rest all upon the Lord by faith. So shall you have perfect peace.”

Friday, June 3rd, a letter to Mr. Collins's father says, “ I have done much out-door work lately, and with good success. If fine, I shall go forth to-night.”

Tuesday, June 7th.—The venerable Joseph Sutcliffe honoured my table with his presence to-day. He told me of his first hearing Charles Wesley at the Bristol room. On that occasion Charles Wesley wore no gown, and preached from Heb. vii. 25 : “ He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.” His manner, in the commencement, was hesitating, and the sentences broken by pauses ; but, as he warmed with the subject, he grew pointed and vigorous, and closed with an application full of fire and power. Mr. Sutcliffe preached in the evening for me at Bloomfield. He gave from 1 Thess. v. 23, 24, a delightful old-fashioned Methodist witness for the doctrine of holiness.

Thursday, June 9th.—Daniel Farquhar has passed the Newcastle District Meeting. So I have written, requesting the Chairman of that District to obtain, if he can, for my Orkney boy, what he much needs, the advantage of the Institution. To facilitate this, I have commissioned him to offer, in case it be done, a donation of twenty pounds towards his maintenance as a student.

Sunday, June 12th, the Communion rails at King Street were crowded with seekers, when a young Quaker, uninvited, but moved by something, somehow,

came up, not to kneel as a penitent, but to observe as a censor. He soon wanted to debate. That, the noise of the Dudley Revivalists prevented. They prayed on; and, in all likelihood, prayed at him: if they did, however, the owner of drab and broadbrim took with characteristic coolness all the candid opinions they may have happened to give Heaven about him; for he quietly kept his post to the end, then went, and they heard of him no more.

That kindly Sheffield "Friend" understood Methodism better, who, as he looked on the building at Carver Street chapel, using a figure easily appreciated in that locality, said, "The Wesleyans are putting up a great *converting* furnace there." The young Dudley Quaker, sceptical about conversions, appears to have given verdict that he perceived nothing but smoke and roar.

Monday, June 13th, the Society at Stourbridge devoted the whole day to religious exercises. Thanks for the Queen's preservation from Oxford's pistol; prayer for God's helpful blessing upon their failing trade; and intercession for a gracious outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon their Circuit, well occupied them until Mr. Collins got there to preach in the evening. He found them sweetly prepared, and writes, "We let down the net at the Master's word, and there was a *good take* of fishes."

Monday, June 13th, Mr. Collins preached at Tipton, in the open air, from Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Many unaccustomed hearers heard; and as the friends sang their way from the field to the schoolroom, many such accompanied them. In the prayer-meeting there, six "outcasts of men" were gathered to Jesus.

Monday, June 27th.—I saw Ann Hancox. She is fast passing away, but is very happy. "Surely the last enemy is under our feet." Here—consolatory sight!—I saw one weak, yet a conqueror; a very feeble child of God facing death and eternity with joy.

Monday, July 25th.—Being Tipton wake and races, I preached out of doors at ten, held a lovefeast at two, and preached in the open air again at half past six. Much good was done, and more evil prevented.

Wednesday, July 27.—Conference opened in London. My colleagues are both there. The suffrages for office were unprecedentedly near. Dr. Hannah was President by one hundred and twenty-nine

votes, but John Scott received one hundred and eighteen. Dr. Newton was elected Secretary by one hundred and twenty-four votes, but John Scott had one hundred and twenty-three.

What a blessing that in the Methodist Conference close runs imply no feuds! None loved, or honoured, each the other more than did these almost equal competitors. The votes once counted, unsuccessful electors give, in that body, adhesion as loyal to officers *de facto* as it would have been possible to have done had the men of their own choice occupied their chairs.

Why did Mr. Collins leave this thick and fruitful harvest field at the end of the first year? Stories of evil are little to my taste. I have, therefore, weeded all the records of these months of every allusion to what, in order to answer the foregoing question, I must now—regretting the necessity of touching such matters at all—briefly deal with and dismiss.

In Dudley Mr. Collins happened upon trying times. The Circuit, under the management of the Rev. Samuel Dunn, became very quiet.

At the head of his Plan, a copy of which now lies before me, the following excellent narrative was placed:—“John Wesley, being asked by Mr. Robert Miller, in the year 1783, ‘What must be done to keep Methodism when you are dead?’ replied, ‘The Methodists must take heed to their doctrine, their experience, their practice, and their discipline. If they attend to their doctrines only, they will make the people Antinomians; if to the experimental part of religion only, they will make them enthusiasts; if to the practical part only, they will make them Pharisees; and if they do not attend to the DISCIPLINE, they will be like persons who bestow much pains in cultivating their garden, but put no fence round it to save it from the wild boar of the forest.’”

The printing of the one word DISCIPLINE, in this really valuable citation, in noticeable Roman capitals, reveals that, in the vision of the Dudley Superintendent, of all four things it looked largest. Those who render Paul’s ἡγούμενοι, “rulers,” might have found in Samuel Dunn, at that date, a man very ready to accept and, after his manner, exemplify their version.

The Trustees in that locality from time immemorial had been accustomed to take not only the rents of the seats, and the gifts at the Anniversary, but also the proceeds of the quarterly collections. A letter, bearing date April 22, 1842, says :—" This thing Mr. Dunn wished to alter, so as to bring the quarterly collections to furnish funds to sustain another man." The Trustees, holding their purse with hard grip, would *yield nothing* of their ancient revenue ; he, proverbially " inflexible," would *abate nothing* in the pursuit of his object. Hence arose contention.

Concerning Circuit finance, our laity have recognised rights. Even improvements may not be dictated. In suasion, not self-will, lies ministerial monetary power.

At Christmas, to force his plans, Mr. Dunn invented a test unknown in their Meetings before ; he would nominate none as Society Stewards who would not engage to " support his procedure." Offended at what seemed to them arrogance of authority, the next Quarterly Meeting in March, by a large majority, negatived the proposal to invite Mr. Dunn to remain another year.

Constituting himself judge in his own cause, he declared that opposition to be factious ; said, " I will not endure it ;" and crying, " Let the Stewards follow me," to the astonishment of all others, leaving behind more than eighty persons, including the leading men of the Circuit, set forth with his handful of friends to another room, where, as if they were the Quarterly Meeting, they passed a resolution of adjournment. At the end of three weeks, the adjourned meeting—" a true Quarterly Meeting," he designated it—*consisting of Stewards only*, met. At that conclave, composed solely of his own pledged nominees, all things of course went swimmingly. It was agreed to recommend to the District Meeting the division of the Circuit ; to ask for another Minister ; and to invite Mr. Dunn to remain.

The representatives of the ignored Quarterly Meeting brought Mr. Dunn before his peers in the District Meeting, charged with the introduction of new official tests ; with unnecessary disturbance of their Circuit about a matter of collections ; with unlawfully dissolving their Quarterly Meeting on March 28th ; and with holding an

unusual and unfairly constituted, meeting to act as if it were the Quarterly Meeting, on Monday, April 18th.

While giving due credit to Mr. Dunn for his laudable design of multiplying labourers in that toilsome field, his ministerial brethren were obliged to condemn *in toto* his illegal methods of procedure. As he had ruled the people harshly, so he flouted his brethren contemptuously. He appealed to Conference, but only submitted to that because he must.

He was forbidden to be any longer Superintendent. Thus wisely was removed from his grasp the crook with which he had beaten the flock he ought to have tended. The Conference smote him for the people's sake. It was both an odd and impudent thing that he, of all on earth, should by-and-bye assume to smite the Conference in the people's name. Putting the torch to a palace is much more facile than building one. It is easier far to be an Erostratus than an architect : easier to wrap in flame the magnificent Ephesian pile, than to rear it. But it was sad that one who might, perchance, have achieved enviable fame as a master builder, should then—and more notably since—cast from him the bright reward possible to his better gifts and tireless energy, by wasting them upon the unworthier task.

Like the loyal helper he always was, Mr. Collins stood by his Superintendent to the last tenable inch. The Diary says :—"Though often grieved at his spirit, I gave him all the support I conscientiously could." When at length compelled to admit that Mr. Dunn's method had been perfectly indefensible, he still carefully let everybody know that, in his judgment, the thing aimed at, viz., an increase of the Ministry, was most needful to be done.

During the pressure of this trouble, the causes of which he had told to his father, he received from him a very characteristic epistle. "I am truly sorry. Why does Mr. Dunn waste his strength in throwing down what it has taken other men so much trouble to build? Why cannot he be quiet? I do not know how his temper would do for my work. A wicked wretch of this town makes it a rule, whenever he meets a Missionary or Minister, to lift his hat, look up to heaven, and invoke



upon them the most horrid curses. Last Monday he met me in a public place, and acted as he is wont. I turned upon him, and said, 'The Lord have mercy upon your soul!' 'Yes,' he replied; 'and confound you, you Methodist thief, for ever!' I lifted up my voice, and cried, 'O Lord, give this man repentance!' He responded, 'And send this canting Parson to everlasting darkness!' I continued, 'God bless this man!'—'And send this fellow to perdition!' he roared. I persisted, 'Lord, let him never suffer the ruin which he wishes for me!' Thus we kept on until hundreds gathered round. Petition outlasted blasphemy; and the reviler, baffled and put to shame, slunk away amid the hisses and groans of the crowd. He had only been bellman for me. To the congregation so unexpectedly brought, I preached, distributed tracts among them, and went on my way, thanking God 'who giveth us the victory.' But this is rough work: and how Ministers who cannot agree with praying men, would get on with cursing men, I do not know.

"Do care for your health, my son. The devil will be well pleased if he can get you prematurely broken down, or killed outright. Entwistle, James Wood, and other such, holy and wise, have passed away in good old age. We want experienced, peaceable men to fill their places: men who will not make breaches, but build up broken walls.

"May He, who is Head of the Church and over all, rebuke for you the wind and the sea, and give you a great calm!"

What this strife cost Mr. Collins, God only can tell. A letter says:—"May the Lord send us quietness! When I come to seek Him in the closet, it is often a full hour before I can get Circuit broils cleared out of the way, and my soul find free thoroughfare." How he rebuked talebearers, who on either hand blew up the flames of contention, every congregation could attest. How he gave the whole weight of his popular influence, and the whole stress of his tremendous exertions, to prevent mischief and to repair damage, was patent to all. Not blaming officials for opposing unconstitutional assumptions, he yet rebuked them without stint, and at

last left them, because, when by action of the District Meeting freed from every vestige of galling yoke, they did not nobly and of willing mind do what necessity, justice, and piety, alike required. He writes:—"Another Minister is absolutely demanded. With our present staff the work is impracticable. We have in Tipton six hundred members; and in places within a mile, three hundred more. I can do all that a man ought to do; but I cannot approach what ought to be done. Henley, the last but one here, worked himself almost into the grave; to which some weeks ago he was carried. Hardy, my predecessor, went away a broken man, and has not yet rallied. I have had an illness; and were I to preach and hold meetings as often as this crowded population presents opportunity, and as often as my feelings prompt, I should soon be worn down."

In another letter, written to me, Mr. Collins says:—"Our leading friends gather round me, and say, 'Do not leave us. Pray do not think of it.' I reply, 'The work, now crushing, with every convert is still growing. If you would have me remain, call out a helper to share my toil.' The answer is, 'O dear no! we can face no such risks. It would land us in embarrassments.' This talk would be endurable, if either our exchequer were in difficulties, or our people were poor. Neither is the case. There is a surplus revenue, and a large, money-getting membership. Why, this very week they are spending as much upon paint as would have kept a young man two years as a winner of souls. I must go: for, first, they refuse the help which is necessary to accomplish the work, and, second, from further contact with prevailing contentiousness my soul shrinks."

The last Dudley Friday record says, "I have this day profited by a treatise of Pike's upon the Christian Ministry. A letter in the Diary of Williams, of Kidderminster, has also been blessed to me. How soon this year has fled! Rye, Gateshead, Evesham, and Keighley have all asked me for next appointment; but I have accepted an invitation to Coventry. Some friends wonder at my choice. They say, 'It is low.' 'By God's help I may improve it.' 'It is poor.' 'That,

might be worse for some other brother than for me.' On the other side, it is easy. I may read my Bible more, pray more, and prepare more fully for weightier charges, if God ever see fit to lay them upon me. It is central: I can sally out, if asked to do so, into other Circuits. It offers me free sphere for working out my own plans: I shall be Superintendent. It is healthy: near to my native air. It is within convenient distance of my wife's mother and friends in London. My choice, which few will covet, has been made in the fear of God. I now dedicate this hour to prayer that for me, and for all my brethren, the decisions of the Stationing Committee may be guided aright."

Thus closed a year entered upon with bright hope; gone through with gigantic effort; marked by entire consecration; educational by the new forms of trial which chequered it; and crowned with wonderful success.

## CHAPTER IX.

### COVENTRY.

METHODISM did not get very early hold in Coventry. Mr. Wesley writes:—"Wednesday, August 21st, 1779, I came to Coventry, and found that notice had been given for my preaching in the Park: but heavy rain prevented. I sent to the Mayor, desiring the use of the town hall. He refused; but the same day gave the use of it to a *dancing master*. I went to the market. Many gathered and listened with all seriousness. I preached there again the next morning, and again in the evening. Then I took coach for London. I was nobly attended: behind the coach were ten convicted felons, loudly blaspheming and rattling their chains; by my side sat a man with a loaded blunderbuss, and another upon the coach." Tuesday, July 11th, 1786, Mr. Wesley went once more, and remarks:—"The *poor little flock* at Coventry have at length procured a neat, convenient room. As many as could get in were all attention. So is the scene changed, that I know not but, if it had been proposed, the Corporation might this time have given the use of the town hall to me, rather than to a dancing-master."

Coventry has oft been troubled by industrial distress: its ribbon-weavers, having to compete with the soup-eating artisans of the Continent, have never been able to maintain wages at the standard of fair English comfort. A petition presented to the House of Commons on the 13th of May, 1819, by P. Moore, Esq., then M.P. for the city, in its plea for relief, stated that "the very best workmen earned but ten shillings per week, though they laboured sixteen hours a day; that

inferior hands could not get enough to obtain necessities; and that poor's rates in aid of them were levied to the amount of £17,500 in one year." The handicraftsmen of the city, though raised above that starvation point, have failed, even yet, to get as a class out of the cold shade of penury. What Mr. Wesley left it, that Mr. Collins found it—"the poor little flock at Coventry." The people were worthy, and, after their power, liberal: but their number was small, their debts large, and their financial burden to them intolerable. In despair, they had wished to relinquish the second Minister. In answer to their overtures, Mr. Collins told them that he could not come to be a "solitary;" that sending labourers from the field would be more likely to extinguish the Circuit than to help it; that, if, however, they would trustfully hold on, in God's name he would come and share the struggle with them.

To be "sent to Coventry" is not pleasant, as understood in common society; ecclesiastical appointment thither, at the date we speak of, though not penal, was as we have shown, not specially desirable: few would have wished it. The choice of such a Circuit set one friend expostulating:—"Why, it is a perfect throwing of yourself away. I do not think an angel from heaven could raise Coventry." "Neither do I," was the calm reply: "but I believe the Lord from heaven can; and He is going with me."

"Saturday, August 27th, 1842.—We arrived at our new home. It is of fair size, and I have a good study. The house needs much to be done in it, but my Stewards have no funds; so I reckon it will tax my own pocket about twenty pounds."

A friend writes to me:—"Mr. Collins's first Sabbath at Warwick Lane Chapel was a never-to-be-forgotten day. The service commenced with that appropriate hymn, beginning:—

‘Give me the faith which can remove  
And sink the mountain to a plain;  
Give me the child-like praying love,  
Which longs to build Thy house again;  
Thy love let it my heart o’erpower,  
And all my simple soul devour.’

“As he gave the lines, force, beauty, and impressiveness, never perceived by me before, seemed to breathe through the words. Then followed a prayer so pleading, so child-like, and yet so mighty, that all believing hearts felt assured that revival was already begun. The discourse, founded upon Deut. xxxiii. 8—11, was original, unique, and stimulating. In the evening, the warnings of the unconverted, the invitations of the penitent, and the appeals for present exercise of faith, had directness and unction such as none of us had known before.”

The Journal record is:—“The congregation is small. I began my pulpit labours with tears: I had signs of good.” My own correspondent states:—“Ten, chiefly senior Sunday scholars, were led that night to cry for mercy;” and adds, “Like results followed successively Sabbath after Sabbath, until our Society was nearly doubled; our congregation more than doubled; and our funds replenished. His morning sermons can never be forgotten while any of the church that listened to them remain. His witness for holiness was constant. His thoughts were profound, heart-stirring, and, for variety, inexhaustible. Upon that theme his words glowed and burned: while the heavenly benignity that beamed in his happy face helped to make every sentence tell.”

Mrs. H—— had been long afflicted; her husband was an Independent: private Eucharist being a custom avoided by the church of which he was a member, its Pastor scrupled to administer to the poor sufferer at home. She had now been a prisoner seven years: whatever logic there might appear to others against clinical Communion, it failed to stay the yearning of her heart, which languished to “do this in remembrance of Jesus.” At a word, wishing to do a service, not to win a proselyte, Mr. Collins went, and, with a Christian friend or two, held a sweet service in the chamber of the invalid. At the close, she exclaimed, “O, my faith has been greatly strengthened. My spirit is refreshed. It has been as if my Saviour had been set forth before my eyes.”

“Friday, September 9th.—This is a large and wicked place. Of 32,000 inhabitants it is computed that 24,000

make no profession of religion, attend no place of worship, and, to a fearful extent, are evangelically untouched. Ignorance, sensuality, and all kinds of immorality abound. There are many Socialists. There is much poverty, and more sin: much degradation and desperation of wickedness. They harden the neck at rebuke. Boys and men, to whom I have spoken in the streets, give me ill replies. Our people are few; our Circuit bowed down with debt; the stewards are in advance £100; and the quarterly deficiency is six or eight pounds. One thing I see, we must visit the out places oftener. What has been called full work here has hardly been enough for healthy exercise. I have never been thoroughly weary since I came. Four times a week is not all the preaching a Methodist Minister must do if he would keep blood of souls off his conscience in a dark district like this. How can things be expected to rise with such little effort? Lord, I give up the Circuit to Thee. Teach me to make the new Plan to Thy glory: but, Lord, while we multiply our deeds, do Thou revive Thy work. O God, help me now to take up a lamentation for the city! I bewail the unbelief of Coventry: many read infidel books, gather in infidel assemblies, and answer rebuke with infidel flippancy. I bewail the profaneness of Coventry: Thy name is taken in vain; men curse, and children blaspheme, in the streets. I bewail the Sabbath-breaking of Coventry: Thy house is neglected, sloth indulged, traffic done, or pleasure pursued, all the day long. I bewail the lack of family care in Coventry: parents neglect, children run riot, and neither pray. I bewail the strifes of Coventry: in business, in politics, in religion. I bewail the abounding wickedness of Coventry. O Thou, who didst weep over Jerusalem, give me tears for the sins of this people: help me to live for the good of this people. Before Thee, and for Thee, I resolve to improve time, to rebuke sin, to declare Thy salvation, and to be continually diligent in every kind of labour."

On Tuesday, September 13th, Mr. Collins paid his first visit to Wood End. A correspondent says:—"We had, to hear the new preacher, a much larger congregation than common, and, while he insisted upon the duty

of present and entire holiness, unwonted feeling and earnest desire pervaded all hearts. The members of Society, with their two Leaders, stayed for renewal of Quarterly Tickets. The senior Leader expressed himself in a very desponding tone. Said Mr. Collins, 'You are like a man in a house with the shutters closed. Light! light! an ocean of light all around, but he will not let it in. Block out the love of God no longer. Let in the light. Let it in at once.' Mr. H—— returned again to dolorous laments of his own unworthiness,, which were thus laconically cut short: 'Why, brothers you are poking at the sinkhole now! Down with the shutters, man! Down with the shutters, I tell you! Look up! Look up in faith, and straightway love of God, the brightest glory of heaven, will fill your soul.' Mr. L——, the other Leader, then also coming upon the Plan as a Local Preacher, spoke far below the mark of one who should be a guide in the Church. He had sunk into a state of doubt. He had more fear than faith, and was living without any satisfactory assurance of personal acceptance with God. 'Why, Lissaman,' said Mr. Collins, 'what do you tell your members? What do you say when you go to preach? I could not preach, and I would not live, in your state of mind for one day. Here,' said he, giving him the Bible, 'read for me 1 John v. 9—12. You see, 'He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son.' Now, which will you do? Will you believe Him? or, will you make Him a liar? Lissaman—a Leader—he ought to believe!—a Local Preacher!—there is no excuse for him—he ought to believe! he must believe! Lord, help him to believe.' "

From the date of this visit Leaders and members alike started forward with fresh vigour. New life came to the place.

Monday, September 19th.—Mr. Collins went to the Financial District Meeting, held in Birmingham. His Steward accompanied him, hoping to obtain £60; but funds being very low, £38 was all the aid he could get. The purse-bearer probably returned disconsolate, but the Pastor enters in his Journal:—"O my God, I look to



Thee alone for my Circuit ;” and then narrates how, at night, he went to preach at Belmont Row, and “ could not supplicate, the Lord so filled his mouth with praise.”

October 5th was set apart as a day of fasting and prayer for a revival of the work of God in the Coventry Circuit. Public services were held at 8 A.M., at 1, and again at 8 P.M. The Diary notices a profitable hour of secret prayer in the vestry, had before the public evening meeting began. At the after service several souls were saved. A letter written the same week contains an important *resumé*:—“ This part of the country is as fine as Kent. Spiritually, however, ‘ Death reigns.’ But, at length, a stir begins among the bones. At each prayer-meeting eight or ten persons have come forward as penitent seekers. In the classes this week I have given twelve notes upon trial. Pastoral visits cheer me by frequent discovery of instances of saving mercy, which, but for them, would have been by me unknown. Thus, yesterday, I learned the cases of two young women: one was set free during the sermon last Sunday; the other found peace at the table of the Lord a fortnight ago.”

“ My colleague, Thomas Hudson, is an Institution man, most amiable in manners, and likely to draw many souls to Jesus by cords of love. He is an excellent helper; works with me well; has begun to fast on Friday; pleads for success; and is a ready-minded man for all good things.”

“ I have a comfortable house, and every person in it is fully alive to God. I have a people, humble, teachable, and who have learned by what they have suffered; I have a field thick with thousands of unconverted; I can generally secure the forenoon in the study; I have God, All Sufficient; I am happy, well assured of being in my right place, and thankful to that Providence which directed me hither.”

“ It is the prime purpose of my inmost soul to get more into heaven, and bring down power of God upon men more than ever. May God subdue the masses! Why are not we, of to-day, endued as the Lord’s mighty ones of old? By Him, let us get to Him: then shall

we prevail as they did. How often do I wish that the precious truths, which constitute the essential witness of Wesleyan Methodism, had full rule and fair play in the soul of every member, officer, and preacher of our Society! Then should we

Seize on foes, divinely bold,  
And force the world into the fold."

A letter, dated October 11th, says:—"The work of the Lord commences delightfully. Almost every Leader has some increase to report. Grace is also opening fountains of liberality. A meeting last night at Bell Green realized £16 from among those poor people towards liquidation of the Circuit debt. Two young men, recent converts, having no money, gave their guns. Another, who has become a teetotalter, subscribed two barrels, for which he has no further use."

"Sunday, October 16th.—I found great nearness to Christ in early prayer. I entered the pulpit of Warwick Lane with tears. Blessing from the Lord sweetly refreshed us all." Mr. Collins remarks upon the humbling, invigorating communion his soul had during the composition of the discourse he gave at night. The text was, Isa. lxiv. 1—4: "O that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, that Thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at Thy presence!" After explaining the original allusions, he treats the words as a prayer that may be used by people of God in any age in which its petitions answer to their circumstances.

Nature is ever obedient. Its course may be relied on: but the ways of the moral world are unsteady; resistance and rebellion have found place there. Being thus, the moral world cannot—without certainty of ruin—be left to work on as it will. It is, therefore, the scene of frequent moral miracle,—of frequent sovereign interposition.

When Moses and Elias came down, nothing is spoken of the heavens being rent for them:—when angels descended upon Bethesda waters, the heavens were not rent for them: but of the Lord it is said, "He bowed the heavens and came down;" a phrase befitting well the Majesty of Him to whose sovereignty alone all things do yield.

Paul did not rely upon power of suasion, energy of new-born conviction, or force of truth. His watchword was, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection. He expected

forth-puttings of the might of God, manifest and resistless as that which raised Christ from the dead, Earth and hell conjoined to slay and keep that sacred flesh ;—that flesh itself, cold and impotent, could neither put forth a foot, nor stretch a hand, nor open an eye, nor any way co-operate with the coming power that quickened it. Gloriously “the power” came; and, lo, the Saviour lived again! This “power,” conquering and matchless, Paul set himself to prove. Relying upon this, he went forth confronting the nations. He calls it:—“The power that worketh in us:”—“The power of His might:”—“The exceeding greatness of His power:”—“The power by which He is able to subdue all things to Himself.”

The descent of God may be sudden as the lightning flash. At creation, one omnipotent word irradiated the eternal darkness with a sudden noon. In Jerusalem the Lord came “suddenly” to His temple. At Pentecost, “suddenly there was a sound as of a rushing mighty wind.”

Preparation is not inconsistent with suddenness. There is much of this in soil, and seed, and root, through winter; yet, at length, it seems as if leaf and bloom all broke forth in one bright May week together. Though for the last great day all days of time prepare, nevertheless terribly sudden will the summons of its trumpet be. There has been in this place considerable preparation work. I have seen streaks in the sky. I have noticed partings in the cloud. I have heard the ice cracking. Winter is giving way. I have felt the softer breeze. Spring approaches. There are sure signs of it. There are tears in the cottages: I have seen them. There are prayers in the sanctuary: I have heard them. There are groans in the closet: I have no doubt of them.

It would delight some of you to be filled with the Spirit to-day. If your child were to be converted to-day, if your class of scholars were to be visited to-day, if careless sinners were to be awakened and saved to-day, what joy would be yours! If such things—above all—would please you, cry now, in the language of the text, for the instant, sudden, coming of the Lord.

Preachers, Leaders, do you not feel need of God in your work? Cry then, “O that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, and come down!”

Teachers, guides, and instructors of youth, you cannot bear your weighty charge alone. Cry then, “O that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, and come down!”

Feeble, secluded, retiring ones, here is a door opened unto you for secret service of the kingdom. Cry, “O that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, and come down!”

Heads of families, mothers, Christian mothers, be not content that your children should come forth upon the world unconverted. Cry, “O that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, and come down!”

Do not weary. If man, by prayer, may bring the descent of God among men, the object is worthy of energy protracted to agony. Do not weary. The heart that pants and cries for God is blessed in its hungering. Do not weary. He will come,—surely come,—soon come. O, cry on, and live according to your cry. Live as those who believe that He is coming;—as those who desire His coming;—

as those who daily expect His coming. O Jesus, long dishonoured, long disowned, come. Come, and show to whom dominion belongeth. Amen. Lord Jesus, come quickly.

At the intercession meeting following the sermon, of which we have just given citation, the penitents were many, and some of the cases were of special interest. One was that of a fallen Local Preacher, who had become first delinquent, and then utterly apostate, having embraced, avowed, and taught, the principles of Socialism.

Saturday, October 22nd, Mr. Collins—that he might be on the spot fresh and ready for a long day of Sunday work—went to, and slept at, Mr. Arlidge's house. He preached in the Baptist chapel, at Sowe, at nine; in Barnacle chapel at eleven; at Bell Green at half past two and at six. Several young men were saved that day.

Sunday, October 30th, was spent in Burslem. He found things much more cheering than at his former visit. Fifteen persons professed to find the Lord. He was informed how, sometime before, a riotous mob had burned houses, and destroyed much property: they were rampant until a handful of soldiers wheeled in sight. Such majesty does authority wear in England; such is the ingrained terror of our people at being found arrayed against it, that, though taken man by man, just as brave as the military, the huge crowd, ten thousand strong, broke and fled before that minim troop of thirty-two. It was law, not sabres, made the stalwart potters run:—a thing, after all, in which we may find more to admire than to laugh at.

Mr. Collins's Journal has some noteworthy passages:—

"Sunday, November 6th. Going to Bell Green, I came up with a stout boy, carrying a basketful of marketings. He was very ignorant, and knew nothing of the sacredness of Sabbath hours. I next met a man coming from his field with a sack of potatoes upon his back; I gave him a word, but, soon after, looking back, I with joy perceived that he was getting a second edition of the lecture, with enlargements, from a good Local Preacher, whose duties brought him along the same way. Praise the Lord. This is right. If we go on thus claiming the highway for God, sin will skulk yet."

"Sunday, November 13th, I rose for prayer before five. The power was felt in the congregations. In the evening I called the prayer-meeting in the chapel, but desired such as were anxious to go into the vestry." One of the Leaders appointed to converse with them writes thus to me:—"About thirty followed us. So over-powered were some, that with difficulty they reached the place. It was a night to be remembered by many."

"Monday, November 14th.—W. Holmes, a Chartist leader, a public advocate of Socialism, and a chief mouth-piece and organizer of the colliers in their late strike, this night publicly renounced infidel principles, before a large congregation at Bell Green. This is a heavy blow to unbelievers there. The man seems candid, serious, and fully convinced of the truth, though not yet made happy by it."

A remarkable conversion—that of Mary B.—took place about this time. Her aunt—with whom she lived—was a useful Leader, whose class Mary joined, but remained unsaved. Some scenes in the revival awoke her scorn, and she said:—"If anybody comes teasing me, I will offend them." Soon after that flippant speech, in a dream her deceased mother, a holy woman, came to her, and, laying her hand upon her, said:—"Mary, work while it is day: night cometh!" Waking with that unexpected message from the dead on her heart, she could rest no more until at the penitent bench, to which at the earliest opportunity she humbly went, the Lord revealed Himself unto her.

"Monday, November 27th.—At Lockhurst Lane I admitted thirteen candidates into Society."

"Sunday, December 11th.—Such a Communion service has never been known here, since the Wesleyans first came to the city, as we have had to-day: one hundred and fifty-one communicated; several found peace with God at the table; all seemed comforted and quickened."

As Mr. Collins had much experience of prayer, so he had much confidence in it. He writes:—"Prayer offered in faith, cannot be unnoticed, yet answers do not always come in the form we look for them. That God has heard me I have had proofs as certain as I have of

my own existence. O Lord, giving me this power puts the key of heaven into my hand. Help me, by faithful exercise of it, to bring blessing down upon this Circuit."

Mr. Collins carefully noted instances of the workings of Providence. Thus he records: "Brother S. declared, 'Since I have given more, I have lost less.' Widow Holland said, 'So soon as I opened my cottage for the Lord, He furnished me, from whom I know not, with fifteen hundredweight of coal for the winter.'" Mr. Sprigg, after preaching one Lord's day, was received into a home, where, though they refreshed him willingly with the best they could, everything was so marked with poverty that his heart was touched. Unobserved he placed and left all the silver he had under a candlestick on the mantel. When next entertained there, the cloud of adversity had passed; but the poor people gratefully told him how, on the former occasion, God had manifestly directed him to help them in a great trouble. Every exertion they could make had been made, and yet a deficiency in the rent was left, which deficiency the sum his charity provided completely and exactly supplied.

"Tuesday, December 27th.—Our Quarterly Meeting was held. Three new places were taken on for preaching. Funds are hopeful. During the last three months we have had many solemn displays of God's power. Sinners of all grades have been saved. We have an increase of ninety members, and sixty on trial. At the evening tea-meeting the feeling was good, and the amount realized towards the Circuit debt swelled up to sixty pounds."

A characteristic and wise letter was written to me, bearing date December 28th, 1842:—

DEAR COUSIN,—

I FEEL anxious about your health. Beware of overdoing. The Master, if you will let Him, will open your way into His vineyard. But if by premature exertion you break up your constitution, or render yourself incapable of study, it will be ruin. Many earnest men shorten life. This need not be done. In the bodily exercises of our Master's work there is surely a medium to be found between softness and excess. Better far exceed in zeal than shrivel in effeminacy; but best of all to learn of Paul, who, though in labours most abundant, yet did them so wisely, that he became "such an one as

Paul the aged." Ask of God: He can teach you, as He did John Wesley, to work successfully through a long life.

Agree with God before you go forth. When Jacob had settled matters overnight with the Angel, he found little difficulty next morning with his brother. In the field of action exhibit the power of your faith by calm firmness of demeanour. If the tone of feeling in a meeting be low, try to raise it rather by brief believing exclamations, than by frequent, long, exhausting prayers.

On Sunday, January 8th, 1843, Mr. Collins, in his evening sermon, set forth the picture of "Christ's confessors," given Rev. xiv. 3—5. The sermon—bating some Faber-taught calculations of the mysterious twelve hundred and sixty days—was stirring, valuable, evangelical, and practical. It gives 1860 as the climacteric year. Old Father Time, that ruthless destroyer of Apocalyptic chronologies, has brought us to the date, but not verified the expositor's announcements. Well, so be it. Thomas Collins's predictions—another warning for the daring—must go to the same limbo which receives and buries hosts of ingenious speculations, endorsed by such names as Brightman and Mede, Bengel and Cumming.

The Coventry Leaders' Meeting, like many other people, had an itch for these novelties, and urgently requested the publication of this discourse. Mentioning this to a friend, half apologetically for the topics on which the sermon treats, Mr. Collins adds words of biographic value, which lay open to us the enlarging ideas of pulpit duty that moved him in its composition. He says:—"In these days Ministers need to be decided and active. Popery and infidelity have to be confronted. The faith must be contended for as well as taught. Public and prevailing sin must be denounced in the name of the Lord. But, while thus valiant for the truth, we must be so in such manner that the infinite worth and goodness of Christ be ever upon our tongue, and so dwelt upon that the world be won to Him." To this end the preacher's own words had in that sermon been faithfully directed; all had been redolent of Jesus, as the spikenard box was of perfume.

Monday, January 18th.—During house-to-house visitation in the neighbourhood where he was to hold an evening service, Mr. Collins entered a cottage, and found

within it a sad, but common case : one of a thousand equally monitory,—ah ! how little heeded !—a woman once a happy Methodist, now out of the pale of all Church recognition. A husband—*a husband without religion*—had been the devil's bait for her soul. Surely in his wooing the man must have come in more presentable form than his visitor found him, for he describes him as “a dirty, wicked, little creature.” The wife had been comely ; but sin had brought the poor backslider down, until now the bridegroom found in her his ill conditions fairly matched. Both were won to hear the Word.

Wednesday, January 25th, a subscription to add class-rooms and obtain an organ for the chapel was hopefully commenced. *The sinking Circuit had become buoyant.* Six months earlier any dream of such expansions would have been thought fit only for “The Arabian Nights.”

Sunday, January 29th, Mr. Collins, being at Hinckley for an anniversary, rose at three, and communed with the Lord. He says:—“I had a sweet time until half-past five. I slept a little after. God was in my heart all day. Souls were saved.” Mr. Collins's host, no admirer of prayer-meetings, gave him, at the close of the evening, his candid opinion, that early suppers were better than late revivalism : “He had no faith in such ways. One half at the chapel were too good to need them, and the other half too bad to be mended by them.” His guest writes, “I was enabled to urge strongly the claims of personal religion. May it yet be a blessing to him and to his wife !”

Sunday, February 5th, special services, with a view to promote revival, were commenced in the Coventry City chapel. I recall that week with gladness. It affords me delight to find in Mr. Collins's Journal my own name, coupled with a sermon about “the faithful saying,” said to be fruitful of results, and noted with some very kind and kinsmanlike commendations—not to be reproduced here : to me privately pleasant proof of that interest taken in my early days, which I joy to know won for me so many prayers of this holy man. It was the first of such services with which I ever stood publicly connected.



Dr. Nettleton says, "I attach much importance to a *series* of meetings." Undoubtedly there is power in reiteration. There must be blow after blow, if the nail is to go deep. In other things none question this method: why should they in religion? Friendship gets its protracted services when the year turns to its days of festival; and, without demur, family love burns warmer through all the months by reason of those Christmas reunions. *Savans* make a week of it at the British Association; nor does the student's hunt after science become less keen by any reaction from that public gathering up of results. The rifle practice of each week is stimulated, and each drill made cheery, by thoughts of those field-days in which our volunteers annually turn out in their camp at Wimbledon, when a prince reviews, and fair hands reward, our successful marksmen. An instinct of humanity underlies these things: why should not religion seize, use and hallow it? I have heard no objection to reiterated religious services that ever touched their principle. All exceptions of any weight really lie but against evils of mode, no way intrinsic to the thing.

The register of that week tells of one young prodigal in tears, and says, "It was affecting to see his good father praying over him." Such scenes are the gems of revival history. The case of another convert, called for special praise. He proved to be the grandchild of the first Methodist Leader in Coventry. The power that fell in those services was mighty. Some ribbon-weavers smitten, but not healed, went away to their employ. Such was their trouble of soul that their hands "forgot their cunning:" the silk broke in their fingers. They had to stop their looms to pray, and were so enabled at the next gathering to confess how in their poor shops they had found the mercy-seat. Salvation followed the pastoral visits as well as the sanctuary labours of the week. G., a boat builder, was ill. He had been considered sceptical. To his chamber Mr. Collins went, and says, "I let him tell me all his sad tale, and then, without shrinking, showed him, and pressed home, his guilt. Such palliations as he urged I vigorously threw aside, by plain assertions of God's rights. I proved to

him, and without relenting, maintained, that *justice must have its course*. He was deeply affected; and when his last excuse was silenced, cried, 'Sir, you hit me too hard.' As he was both convicted and alarmed, I now set myself patiently to show him how *in Jesus justice has had its course*. The Gospel seemed new to him. He drank it in at once, eagerly as would a thirsty deer the stream, and there and then found peace." With such facts occurring, what wonder that, as the days passed on, the interest deepened, and the congregations grew, until, upon the final Sabbath, the chapel, whose desolate look extorted tears when first the preacher saw it, was filled in every aisle, and crowded up the pulpit stairs. Thus hearers were multiplied, sinners rescued, and the Church confirmed.

To Leamington, and to Birmingham, Mr. Collins went forth to give his valuable help in similar services. In the Birmingham East Circuit, for weeks before he came, a few young men united in intercession for a mighty outpouring of the Spirit in connection with his visit. It came. At Belmont, on February 15th, he preached from Acts ii. 40. It was a sermon perhaps matched, but not exceeded, in raciness and strength by Daniel Isaac's published discourse from the same text. Much good resulted. The next night he expounded Deut xxviii. 26—29, in the most sweet, simple, spiritual manner possible. Some reminiscences I can afford:—*"The eternal God is my refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."* "As I sat in the railway carriage, we stopped at Weedon; a soldier's wife, from the barracks there, came in, with two young children and an infant at the breast. Novelty, noise, and motion, much excited the children who were not 'in arms;' the one there, busy drawing life from her life, lifted but his eyes to meet her kindly look. The sudden whistle, which warned us of an approaching tunnel, startled him somewhat; but her quiet glance of love assured him again, and he sank back to nestle in her embrace. The tunnel was long, and when we emerged I observed that little one *asleep!* Then, in my heart, I prayed;—'So, O my Father, may I repose upon Thy bosom and under Thine eye. So, as I enter the valley of death, may I

fall asleep upon Thine arms, to awake and find myself with Thee in the light of eternity !'

" 'Everlasting arms' are 'beneath thee.' Jeshurun, rest upon them: rest upon thy God. One Sabbath I entered the cottage of a good man, and said: 'Well, James, is your soul joying in God to-day?' 'Indeed, no. My mind is clouded, my prayer feeble, and my heart cold. I can, however, still conscientiously say that I hate sin, and, though with many fears that it will master me, strive against it.' 'You want perfect love, James.' 'I do, I feel I do.' 'Have it then.' 'Is not that what I wish? Is not that what I am trying for?' 'Yes, James, you have *tried* too much, and *trusted* too little. Here; read this:—

Round thee and beneath are spread  
The everlasting arms.

'Whose arms?' 'God's.' 'Where spread?' 'Around my soul and underneath.' 'Why, man, say you so? Sink down upon them then and *rest*!' 'I will try.' 'James! James! there you are again; trying instead of trusting. Suppose you placed your child in the cradle, and said, "Now, dear one, rest," would you expect the little one to set itself shaking the cradle, and to say, "I am trying?" would he rest so?' 'No, Sir, he must *be still* to rest.' 'And so must you, James. Tell God, 'Thou art Mine, and I am Thine:' cast thyself on His fidelity: sink down upon Him, and, on an arm firmer than rock, tenderer than a mother's, thou shalt rest.'"

At the conclusion of this sermon, filled with things deep, touching, and very beautiful, the Communion rail, at a word was surrounded by seekers; and as fast as any, being made happy, withdrew, others took their place. By such relays, through two blessed hours, the whole space was kept full.

Wednesday, March 8th, was the first of the Coventry race days. True to his conviction of the duty of opposing public sins, Mr. Collins set forth a handbill, giving six reasons why people should not go. It was the most trenchant, vigorous paper that I ever saw of the kind. Thousands, at his own expense, were printed

and distributed. It was known that the appeal turned back some to pray who had started in the path of vanity. As he was coming home from a protracted meeting, held to keep young converts in good and happy employ, Mr. Collins met one of the devil's over-burdened beer-carriers. The poor wretch's line of walk was so eccentric that he might have been supposed to have business on both sides of the road at once. His method of locomotion was anything but uniform. First he ran, then he reeled, next, with serio-comic air of dignity, attempted to pull himself up to a perpendicular. Alas ! his whirling brain made him top-heavy: he lurched, now this way, now that, staggered, fell, and found a couch in the gutter, with a mud-heap for a pillow. A respectable-looking man, with some trouble and much bedaubing, set him once more on end again. The delirious sot, evidently fancying himself a party in a prize ring, cried, "Time;" and gave a blow, well delivered, full in his helper's face. Irritated by this unexpected and ungrateful assault on his nose, the man first boxed the pot-valiant fool well, then, with more kindness than he deserved, taking him out of the wet and out of the way, reared him against the wall, and left him, sad specimen of race-day work, to get sober at leisure.

A letter, dated March 15th, gives good information of the progress of the work of the Lord. It says :—"This is a pleasant little Circuit : much to my mind. I bless God that I came. In September last three hundred met in class ; more than five hundred meet now. As the harvest of half a year, all things considered, this is the best I ever saw. Many of the cases of conversion have been remarkably interesting. Rejoice with us, in what the Lord hath wrought ; but ask yet more, for tens of thousands yet unsaved still dwell around us.

"I was lately at Leamington ; the church there seemed greatly refreshed, and I hear that signs of quickening have continued ever since. From among the converts of that day, the lady with whom I stayed has gathered six new members for her class, and others, I hear, have been equally successful. While God thus blesses extra-parochial visits, I dare not refuse, up to my power, to pay them : but applications for such out-

goings are pressing upon me too numerously. I must not neglect my own people, nor peril the glorious work commenced in this town."

"Tuesday, March 28th.—We have held our Quarterly Meeting. It has been a most comfortable day. When the brethren learned of our increase, and also heard from the Stewards the cheering news that income not only met expenditure, but also yielded towards the debt an overplus of four pounds, they were greatly moved, some of them even to tears, by overwhelming sense of the mercy of the Lord."

Mr. Collins was characterised by such persistence in well-doing, that, if literally reproduced, his diary would let attention flag by sameness of good. Suffice it to say that, for some months, house-to-house visitation, cottage meetings, out-door preachings, and series of sanctuary services, were all successfully tried. The toil, too, as of old, was interblent with prayer. One record tells of "two hours secured for sweet intercourse with God;" another says, "I rose before day for prayer;" a third witnesses, "I had a precious time in a wood near Meriden, crying, 'Come, Lord Jesus.'" Take yet one further note: "The Lord has given me many secret refreshings this week." Is the power of this man, so oft in audience with God, any wonder?

A memorable visit was paid to Mrs. S., who very peacefully, and very painlessly, was going home. Her life was gently fading like the morning star, which, as one says, "melts away into the light of heaven." After a thrilling testimony of the rapture felt, she observed, "But, you do not look well; you do not seem cheerful; what is the matter?" He replied, "Nothing is the matter; I am all right: but then our cases differ. Happy woman! you are near your labour's end: I am in the midst of mine. What wonder that, looking at it out of the sunshine of Beulah country, my joy to you seems dim?" He remarks, "I came away much encouraged by the bliss of this departing saint."

When opportunity served, Mr. Collins loved to hear as well as preach. About this time I find notices of his preaching under the Word delivered by Dr. Beaumont; of his preaching in a discourse by Peter Jacobs, a Chippewa

Chief; and of solemn feeling awakened by a very affecting sermon on "All souls are Mine," by James Parsons, of York.

A letter, dated June 14th, says, "We have had a comfortable District Meeting; three hundred increase; one thousand one hundred on trial; finances fair; no objection against any brother. At Coventry we sadly needed more class-rooms, and the chapel was dirty and out of repair. My poor fellows met in committee, talked, talked, talked, and did nothing, until I was weary. Seeing the season passing, and clearly understanding that they would talk on, but never face the expense, at my own risk, I just set the workmen going. We have repaired the roof, whitewashed the chapel walls, and built three new class-rooms. I fully expect that my year's salary is sunk; but never mind, if only the way for the Lord's work be cleared, and men's souls get saved."

The year 1843 was the date of several important public events which greatly stirred the religious world. First, the outrages at Tahiti, where poor Pomare got from the French such protection as the wolf gives to the lamb; where the London Society's Mission was threatened and impeded by armed force; and Papal supremacy proved by the logic of bayonets and cannon shot. Then came Sir James Graham's notorious education scheme, professedly designed for the elevation of the manufacturing districts, but so unjustly devised as to give all control of religious instruction to the Anglican clergy, hundreds of whom, in the fresh zeal of young Puseyism, were then declaring the exclusive validity of episcopal ordination; treating Nonconformists with utter contempt; preaching everywhere the destructive delusion of salvation by sacraments; denouncing Protestantism; sidling off towards Rome; and acting out the full-blown Jesuitry of Tract No. XC. This measure, which bore more the impress of priest than statesman, failed, as any attempted legislation must which goes upon the supposition that but one form of Christianity is recognised in England. That narrow thought vanished from our laws when the Stuarts disappeared from the throne. It is as far behind the times as the slashed costume of

the Cavaliers. In the high judgment of Lord Mansfield, the Toleration Act more than permitted ways of worship other than those of prelatists. It passed upon them the nation's verdict of, "Innocent." They were thenceforth to be, not merely connived at by authorities, but to be protected by the laws. We tell those who claim to teach the children of our poor, and we will always tell them, that Nonconformist rights are for ever woven into the Constitution of this free realm; that we will not be ignored; that the position won we will keep; and are resolved that the status and liberties which have been our birthright shall also be our legacy.

On Thursday, May 18th, 1843, occurred the most remarkable ecclesiastical event of this century; when, for the crown rights of Jesus, Chalmers, and Candlish, and Cunningham, and five hundred more of Scotland's best, turned their backs on kirk, and glebe, and manse, and bade Cæsar and his money-bags "good-bye." The fact was heroic. Every Scotchman stood measurably taller that day. Critical natures, like that of Lord Jeffrey, were stirred. "I am proud of them," he said. Any opponent so busy with hostile logic that he could not admire conduct so honourable to common Christianity, would deserve the label which the matchless power of Guthrie fixed for life upon one whom he described as "*clear as a moonbeam, and cold as an icicle.*"

"Expressions of Christian oneness, long yearned for, happily characterized this year. Christian unity is felt by spiritual men to be a fact; but how to make the fact visible has been a problem puzzling many ages. Solution has been immensely delayed by the error of counting uniformity essential to unity. Uniformity is a bigot's dream. Sad experience, red with blood, black with tyranny, full of failures, has demonstrated it to be unattainable. We doubt whether it be desirable; we are sure it is unnecessary. In that year good men seem to have read afresh the primitive motto: "Forbearing one another in love;" and wondered and wept that their eyes had been holden so long from reading it before. The banns of matrimony between Principle and Charity were loudly proclaimed, and an Alliance made, the fundamental law of which is Recognition without Compromise.

On the very first day of 1843, this note of love was sounded in an enthusiastic gathering which, at the call of Dr. Leifchild, crowded Craven chapel; next ensued a Conference of evangelical Ministers of many names, held in the Wesleyan Mission House, under the presidency of the venerable Richard Reece; then followed, in June, a wonderful meeting in Exeter Hall. Its breath of love would have slain bigotry, it must have died *instantly* amid the glorious eloquence of that day.

In each movement of this remarkable time, I find evidence of Mr. Collins's deep interest. By prayer, and speech, and effort, and gift, he did what he might to thwart the evil, and to help the good. He writes:—"We are passing through eventful times. The forces of light and of darkness seem alike to be drawing together and marshalling. Tremendous collisions may be looked for. They only are safe 'who still abide close sheltered in His wounded side.'"

On Monday, July 24th, Mr. Collins went to Sheffield to the Conference. He hired chambers, and invited his sisters to meet him; thus adding to the zest of Conference services the joy of family festival. Mrs. Collins was not able to accompany him. A specimen of the devout, yet piquant, style in which she kept her husband current with Coventry affairs I subjoin:—

Daniel Farquhar is here. The steamer that has been wrecked was the very one he intended to have come by. His sister for some reason, which at the time seemed rather whimsical than weighty, preferred another. He yielded, not to her argument, but to her wish: thus God, whose are all our ways, and in whose hand our breath is, saved him.

Yesterday morning, Mr. H——, from 1 Chron. xii. 32, described for us "men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do." As he used notes much more largely than common, I taxed him with the fact, as we sat at the tea-table. He admitted the indictment, but pleaded that the nature of the subject demanded such correctness as could not be easily insured by memory. The discourse dealt with Puseyism, and other topics of the day, and seems to have been prepared with great pains. I must say that, though *rather grand*, the thing was well done. I like these books in pulpits so little that, had it been night, I might have thought it venial if somebody had emancipated him from his literary fetters by blowing the candles out; an old trick which I remember your Kentish men once to have played upon a reader who mistook his way into their region. Our Sunday lecture had no lack of warmth. I assure



you the worthy man quite perspired with earnestness, while, with theologic cudgels, he banged to purpose the Scarlet Lady of Babylon. Her well deserved pommelling did not, however, make me weep so much as when you told us of Esau and Jacob kissing.

I must cease; it is late, and I am weary. What a comforting word is that: "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength!" Long time has passed since first it was applied to my soul; but it wears well, and has brightened in my eyes from year to year ever since.

Adieu! dear husband. May you find treasures in prayer! May the God of peace be with you! May He sustain you, bless you, and enrich you with all grace!

At Conference, Mr. Collins set himself to understand affairs, admired the wisdom of President Scott, was made glad by every service, and rejoiced in the reported increase of eight thousand six hundred. Yet, at the end, he writes:—"It is refreshing to return to my poor, loving people again. Much business, little retirement, and no preaching are not good for me."

The poet's despairing one rushes to death, crying, "Anywhere, anywhere, out of this world!" That sentiment we repudiate; but Stationing Committees think it the acme of Methodist Preacher perfection joyously to say, "Anywhere, anywhere, *in* this world." Strange changes from Dan to Beersheba annually occur. They come under no rule, except the all-including one of Providence. To one just tried by such vicissitude, Mr. Collins, not inexperienced in the same, wrote:—"I hope your wife learns to bear and to enjoy our vagrant kind of life. There are not many earthly attractions in it; but, tell her, it is full of rewards and satisfaction to those whose hearts are right."

The first Journal record after the Conference breathes the contented spirit which his counsels inculcated:—

"Friday, September 1st, 1843.—I am re-appointed to Coventry. My soul this day is happy in God. I devote myself to the great work of exalting my Saviour. Recent perusal of Count Zinzendorf's Life has much moved me to this. What a strong lover of Christ he was! A certain Professor of Divinity once, in his hearing, in a large company, spoke most beautifully of Jesus. Stirred by the sweet sentences, that holy nobleman could not contain himself; but, as they closed, rose, fell on the

speaker's neck, and kissed him before them all. I select magnifying my Lord as the end of this year's endeavour. Sermons, prayers, and efforts shall go that way."

About this time an invitation to Sussex came from Mr. Austen, thus commencing:—"Dear friend, unto whom, as the instrument of my salvation, I am eternally indebted; whom I respect above all others; and whom I long to see." Who could refuse a request so prefaced? Mr. Collins at once acceded. At his home the good farmer told Mr. Collins:—"When I began to seek the Lord, I left ten boon companions. They said I should soon return to them; they predicted that I should find religion dull, and get me back to the parlour of 'The Ring o' Bells.' From such a fall grace has kept me; while now, poor fellows, they are all gone. In yonder churchyard I can walk over all their graves; and, Sir, but for religion, doubtless ere this I should have been in mine too." Mr. Collins's record of this evangelical campaign is joyous:—"At St. Leonard's, twelve young persons were saved. At Goudhurst we had conversions. Though Northiam was quiet, and Sandhurst would be the better for a shaking, yet it filled me with gratitude to meet scores of my spiritual children. The work abides. They are in health. Bless God! they will live for ever."

A letter, dated September 14th, from Mrs. Collins's brother, T. H. Graham, Esq., says:—"I have just had very special cause for gratitude for preserving mercy. As for five years I have given up shooting, you will think it rather *young* of me to have gone out again. Last Saturday was a most lovely day; so, though taking no gun myself, I accompanied Reginald and my game-keeper, that I might watch the running of the dogs, which is, really, very beautiful. We came to a wood, always a dangerous place for shooters, and some how I got struck. I did not use my common prudence. The keeper was no way to blame. Through all the twenty-four years he has been with me I never knew him careless. The issue, however, was, that two shots were lodged, one on either side of my left eye, but, thanks to my gracious God, without any serious injury either to

health, vision, or appearance. So you may praise Providence, and put away fear."

This chivalrous shielding of an old servant from blame is characteristic of the true gentleman. Mr. Graham continues:—"I thank you for the very excellent Address of your Conference: its remarks upon the Free Kirk question much delighted me. Your letters of ample Wesleyan information for Mr. Douglas, of Cavers, leave me much in your debt. You burn with desire for rapid increase: perhaps steady, continuous growth of your Society may, in the end, be better. I often ponder that saying—'The kingdom cometh not with observation.' Sudden and striking results lead to idolatry of instruments. This tendency makes necessary much restraint of Divine power. The healthiest and safest condition of things is when progress comes of the lively, spiritual, aggressive action of Christians in general. Such common effort—with the least possible individual peril of pride—spreads the Redeemer's kingdom apace.

"Mr. Wright, an interesting man, trained to the law, but now separated to the Gospel, has been here. I collected my neighbours in three places. On each occasion, with great plainness and power, he brought before them the Gospel invitation, and pressed them to embrace there and then the salvation so freely offered unto them in Christ. Sir Andrew Agnew has only just left us. He has lately addressed a letter, ostensibly to the shareholders of the Glasgow and Edinbro' railway, but really an appeal to the shareholders of all lines everywhere. Perhaps you might get the Coventry editors to insert it as a piece of information. It has thus got not only admittance, but commendation, in many provincial papers."

Douglas, of Cavers, widely known as one of the most thoughtful Christian authors of our time, thus wrote to Mr. Collins:—

CAVERS, *October 31st, 1843.*

MY DEAR SIR,—

I AM much obliged by your gift of the Centenary volume, and still more for your own full and careful information respecting the Wesleyan body. Great thanks are due to the Author of all good for the benefit Methodism has conferred upon England. In what a

state would that country have been, if the multitudes rescued by Wesleyan exertions from vice and ignorance had been left to augment the mass of crime and discontent! The narrative of the work of God you have recently witnessed in central England—of the nature of revival—has given me much pleasure. It is very desirable that accounts of such seasons of refreshing as from time to time gladden the labours of your ministry should be set forth. Though, perhaps, well known in the Wesleyan body, they escape general attention. More publicity given to these things would edify all.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours,

JAMES DOUGLAS.

After the close of the September visitation, Mr. Collins writes:—"The state of things comforts me. Defalcations are fewer than might have been feared; several feeble classes have been strengthened, and, as to experience, the people are doing well."

Sunday, October 1st, began a week specially dedicated to exhortation and prayer. True to his design of glorifying Christ, Mr. Collins led off with a sermon from Psalm lxxii. 15: "He shall live, and to Him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for Him continually; and daily shall He be praised."

Concerning work and fruit, accept these entries:—"Willenhall;—not fewer than twenty blessed with peace in the evening."—"Barford;—some souls came to Jesus."—"Dudley;—salvation work was done."—"Coventry;—at the Communion we had sweet feeling; the congregation is both larger and steadier; forty or fifty new sittings have been taken this quarter."

The following letter is a good specimen of the respectful, painstaking, loving way in which Mr. Collins dealt with good, but mistaken, disquieted, narrow men:—

COVENTRY, *November 10th, 1843.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,—

YOUR main objection to continue in place among us appears to be the expense of Preachers. Allow me to offer you a few thoughts on that subject.

*First.*—The Preachers must appear in society equal to Ministers in general; equal to shopkeepers of standing and respectability; equal to excise officers, surgeons, and such like people. "Why must?" Propriety demands it. In your own measure you feel thus. You would not allow your Minister to be worse provided for than you are yourself. But is it clear that your *status* marks the true level?

Do you not see that the very same principle which thus works in you, an artizan, works also in those a little above you, and causes them to feel that they ought not to allow their Minister to be provided for noticeably worse than they are? "Then let them give accordingly." No doubt they should, and many of them do; nor are you to give in proportion to their ability, but only as your own conscience before God tells you that you can afford.

*Then again.*—Preachers must give money continually to the poor and sick; at public meetings; and to benevolent institutions. It would be an awful thing if the Church were to pare its pastors down until it would become impossible for them to give any example of liberality to the flock and to the world.

*Thirdly.*—Our Ministers need more than others by many pounds in the year. Their charge is not a congregation but a Circuit, to each place in which in all weathers they must go. Itinerancy of families involves also expenses—never fully met—which other ministries have not to bear. A settled man probably could do with £100 as well as we could with £120.

You suggest that Preachers should have a fixed stipend, and you put the money at £100 *per annum*; you say:—"People would then know what to aim at, and when they had done with it." The system Methodism has chosen is:—

1. *Kinder.*—You cannot fix wants: sickness or growth of family will make them vary.

2. *Easier.*—The Circuit brings to its Quarterly Board 8s. 4d. *per annum* per member; no intolerable load; the well-to-do should add of their greater fulness: then when all is done, if the sum fall short of the Circuit's necessities, Connexional help may be sought.

3. *More evangelistic.*—Each bringing their customary gift works thus:—If numbers increase, funds show overplus, and you see your way to call out another labourer; but if you altered this into simple indebtedness of—say—£100, as you have said, 'the people would aim at that, and know when they had done.' One hundred members must raise it, and six hundred would do no more.

4. *Wiser.*—All who have known its working so think it. Hence, such as have separated from us have retained this part of the old Methodist plan; practically confessing that they can do with no other, and find no better.

Now, my dear brother, I greatly want you to resume your place and labours, therefore do I enter into these explanations: but let me be understood; I do not wish to urge upon you a work which your judgment will not approve. If, after all, in your mind and conscience you do not approve of Wesleyan Methodism, do not be a Wesleyan; if you do not approve of our collections, do not be a Leader, for whoever is a Leader must make them, or be unfaithful. This you have understood, for you have adhered faithfully to every part of our economy hitherto. I admire in you that honesty which would rather resign your trust than betray it; and I further know that your difficulty has much arisen from a compassionate delicacy—mistaken, of course, I think—towards your poorer members; a delicacy which has made it painful for you to mention these collections to them. It may help you to see the mistake if I ask, Have any of them ever

given as much as they have gained? Should any of them be excluded from the privilege of beneficence? Will it not pain you more, if, following your example, they stray from the fold, fall away, and spend far more upon sin than collections have ever cost them?

I trust you will see it right to resume your work, and hope that you may henceforth be happy in it. Pray dismiss all hard thoughts of Travelling Preachers. As toward me personally you express confidence, I presume upon that confidence to assure you that I do not know a more holy, laborious, generous set of men; nor any men who are doing as much for God and mankind as Wesleyan Ministers are.

I remain your constant friend,

THOMAS COLLINS.

On Sunday, December 3rd, Mr. Collins was among his old friends at Redditch. It appears that on Wednesday, August 3rd, 1843, thunderings, unprecedentedly loud, alarmed the town. The Methodists sent the bellman round to summon the people to prayer. Many who, terror-stricken in that tremendous storm, had thought that surely Nature's final hour was come, obeyed the invitation. Several were brought to God; and, among the rest, J. M., the head of a set of poachers. He had carried with him in his pocket to the prayer-meeting an order from a Birmingham dealer for five pounds' worth of game. After the experience of that hour, filching in the woods was no work for him. When his "pals" came up in the gloaming, to put themselves, as usual, under his guidance, he handed over the order; but told them that he was "Christ's man now," and that he would "poach no more." Bereaved of their captain, they lost heart, and the gang broke up. Wild ways had reduced the prodigal to straits. Before Sunday, knowing the penury of his wardrobe, some friends sent the new convert a tolerable chapel-going suit. He wore it in the morning service, but sent it back to them in the afternoon, and appeared in his own at night. The sturdy Englishman preferred seeming poor to being an almsman. That was hopeful conduct. He plainly meant to be a hanger-on of nobody. He turned out to be true and steadfast. Work soon mended his apparel; and Mr. Collins says, "I found him prospering for both worlds."

This visit to the scenes of early days and old mercies was felt to be so pleasant that it took little urging to

induce its repetition. Early in the new year, he went again, and spent in special services Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, the 10th, 11th, and 12th of January, 1844. The six o'clock and the noon-time prayer-meetings had his presence. In the intervals he visited many that were sick. He notes:—"Poor J. W. has learned infidelity in France, but is now penitent. The froth of Voltaire gives no strength to face eternity with." "Mrs. F. was so delighted to see me once more, that, as we united in thanks, she fainted on her bed with excess of joy." "I spent several hours, day by day, in secret prayer; my soul was refreshed, and the Word, each evening, was clothed with power. Many found peace, and a good number opened their hearts to the fulness of love."

A letter from Mr. Collins to his mother, bearing date January 13th, 1844, affords felicitous domestic news:—"I arrived home from Redditch this day, about one o'clock. What think you? During my absence the Lord had given me a son. I found him, a fine, healthy boy; ready to receive me. He was born on the morning of Thursday, 11th, at four o'clock. My dear wife has been mercifully upheld, and is doing well. How precious she seemed to me! I am exceeding joyful and grateful; join with us in thanksgivings."

The next Friday record makes permanent a memorable act of praise:—

"Friday, January 19th.—Six in the morning. I bless Thee, O Lord, for Thy goodness to man in all ages and places; for Thy goodness to the first man; for the patience Thou hadst with Cain; for the salvation given to Abel; for sustaining Enoch and preserving Noah; for keeping promise with Abraham; for succouring Moses; and for all Thy long-suffering with Thine ancient people; but, above all, for the gift of Thy Son, and for all the mercies of the Gospel dispensation.

"I bless Thee for all Thy mercies to me in childhood, in youth, and in riper years. I bless Thee for breaking and renewing my heart under Gideon Ouseley; for weaning me from sin a second time under William Davis; for keeping me five years amid the seductions of the world before I began to travel; for opening my way to

the Wark Mission, and for all the communion I had with Thee there. For my appointment to Sandhurst I bless Thee, and for my appointment to Orkney. Thou wast with me in Durham and in Dudley, and I have sweetly found Thee with me here.

"How shall I thank Thee for the abounding mercies of last week? Thou wast with me at Redditch. I praise Thee for helping Tindall and Sheers to commence the good work; for Thy presence with Andrews; for Thy blessing on me; for delicious closet hours; for chambers of sickness made bright with the light of heaven; for Thy gift of perfect love to some, and of converting grace to more.

"I thank Thee for bringing me home. For my son,—the dear gift Thou hast bestowed,—and for preserving my wife in the hour of her trial, my heart cannot sufficiently utter its gratitude. I consecrate myself to Thee. Quicken me, O Lord, for Thy work!"

With Mr. Collins, "renouncing the pomps and vanities of this wicked world" was something more than a venerable phrase; it was a veritable requirement of religion, to be acted out every day. His children were carefully trained in obedience to that part of the baptismal covenant; no finery ever bedizened them. Could feminine nature be expected never to resist this godly discipline? He writes, "My Emmy expressed wishes for fine clothes." She was too young to know either their snare, or the pang her wish would give her father's heart. He set forth before her Jesus trampling on such desires by choosing the manger cradle, by leading a life of self-denial, and by directing His work and way among the poor. Dear child! that picture of the Saviour melted her; she said, with tears, "Papa, I only want one thing, and that is to be good." It is believed that the aim for life that hour selected was never after departed from.

Letters of this period furnish interesting narrative:—"Two enterprising brethren, Deacon and King, have rented for us a new place at Spon End. The Dissenters have tried it before, but have failed. The neighbourhood is very dark and heathenish. Nothing less than hard labour, with prayer and fasting, will cast out the devil that now triumphs there.



“ I have seen good in recent visits to neighbouring Circuits. At New Town Row, in Birmingham, a number of very poor people were saved. At Bromsgrove, where I preached at seven in the evening, and at six the next morning, brother Mainwaring tells me that he took thirty names. One anxious man there followed me to my lodging. Much dejected, he was trying to humble himself into fitness for Christ. His eyes were opened as I exposed to him the subtle pride that, hidden from him, lay beneath that attempt. I proved to him that self-renunciation, acceptance of Christ—just there, just then, all ungodly as he was—would be the truest humility. I plied him with ‘ the record God hath given of His Son;’ he believed it, and went away rejoicing.

“ I have lately published a handbill-tract on the Sabbath. God has owned the effort. I have also put into print an account of an affecting occurrence, in my mind worthy of such notice, which recently took place at Langford, near this city.”

The occurrence adverted to was this :—A poor, swearing, ill-living woman thought, in a dream, that she heard sweet singing in a tent ; allured by the sound, she entered, and was astonished to find that those attractive notes had come from the lips of a man so tiny that he was suitably mounted upon a butterfly with beautifully spotted wings. As, wonderingly, she approached, the strange little rider, with piercing voice, said to her, “ This day month thou wilt die !” Those words of doom awoke her, and she could sleep no more. This dream, next day, with many tears, she rehearsed to her neighbours. They, marking how strongly it affected her, and being godly people, urged her to act as she would do if sure that it were a warning from the Almighty. They besought her to give up her sins, to come with them to the house of God, and at once begin to lead a new life. All of which things she promised to do, but never did. On occasion of several outbreaks of her accustomed profanity, they kindly renewed their exhortations. At length, she, who had never adverted to that vision of the night without paleness and visible trembling, let them know that she had dismissed alarm. Her daughter’s child was dead. The omen of the dream, she

thought, was now made out. Breathing again without fear, she cursed without stint. But, on the very last morning of the month assigned, she was taken ill; soon became unconscious; lay through the day without one movement, or one word; and, a little before midnight, died.

This startling story, published at the time, in the place, with full attestation of the well-known, trustworthy persons who had held the conversations with the woman, was the means of causing serious thought in some by whom ordinary tracts or sermons would have been unheeded.

Sunday, February 4th.—I preached in the afternoon at Spon End. The place was filled. Many were affected. After preaching, sixteen or eighteen boys and girls of the school remained behind, weeping and praying with great earnestness.

Wednesday, February 18th.—I went to help in special services at Leamington; had liberty and success. The next morning, though it snowed heavily and was bitterly cold, many met me in the chapel at five o'clock. I dined, and passed a refreshing hour that day with good, happy Lady Carnegie. The evening preaching was accompanied with unction. The Lord's people were greatly rejoiced; they seemed to be sitting in heavenly places, blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus.

Tuesday, March 26th.—Dr. Newton preached for us twice, nobly. We gathered £26 for our chapel. He baptised my boy: we called him "Thomas Graham."

Friday, April 12th, 1844.—This day I am thirty-four. How great has been God's goodness unto me! He called me into the ministry. He separated me from worldly things unto this glorious work. The Great Shepherd hath set me to seek and, so far as I can, to bring unto Him His lost and wandered sheep. I am determined to live for this. I am willing, yea, Lord, I am fainting for the longing I feel to answer Thy call and to do Thy work.

Thursday, May 2nd.—Thomas Davis, a recent convert from infidelity, died in peace. He is the fifth Socialist won back to the faith of Christ since I came here.

Monday, May 20th.—Benjamin Sadler, Esq., laid the memorial stone of a new chapel at Kenilworth. I was delighted with the eulogy he gave of Bramwell and Carvosso; and with the earnest hope he expressed that Wesleyans would never cease to preach and press their founder's views of Christian perfection. When he had finished, I mounted the stone and preached from Isa. xxviii, 16.

The Journal of this week records a monitory instance of a scoffer smitten. An excellent person, a Mrs. Sansom, died. An infidel expressed his disgust at what

he called "the fuss" the Methodists made over a dead woman. "When I die," said he, "I am done with; and I don't care what they do with me." "Mark you," said he flippantly, "If I thought that there would be a resurrection, I should like a hole to myself." Little did this foolish trifler with life and death think that that very night "the king of terrors" would come to him: but so it was. He was found in his bed lifeless the next morning.

Friday, May 24th.—This day I had in my chamber delightful communion with God. While thanking Him for past mercies, I felt growing love, great sweetness of spirit, and increase of expectation, that with reviving power, He would visit my Circuit again.

On June 4th, from various congregations Mr. Collins forwarded six petitions against the Unitarian Chapel Bill, then before Parliament. The Member of Parliament to whom he committed them replied, "I have duly presented, but am not free practically to support the prayer of them. The subject allows great room for difference of opinion. I incline to think that the Bill has justice on its side. None can believe Unitarian doctrine to be more erroneous than I do; but this seems to me a question of property, not theology." The putting of the honourable member was ingenious, but irrelevant. The petitioners never dreamed of denuding Unitarians of anything which was really their own on the ground of lack of orthodoxy. The matter complained of was their usurpation of evangelical endowments—a thing as unjust to the rights of property as their creed, in our view, is unfaithful to the text of Scripture. Spoliation legalised is spoliation still; nor before God will lapse of twenty years make a thievish holding honest. Mr. Collins remarked, "I fear that the Bill will pass; but, at all events, the opposition it has called forth has achieved one good thing—Socinians henceforth must stand alone. The common Christianity of the land refuses to be counted up with them. By these petitions other denominations have, before Parliament and before the nation, solemnly repudiated communion with the sect that denies the Divine honours of God's redeeming Son."

**Monday, June 10th.**—Dr. Styles, the Congregational Minister laid for us the foundation-stone of our new chapel at Barnacle. Brother Laycock preached.

**Tuesday, June 11th.**—I preached in the fair from Num. xxi. 9.

Mr. Collins having become pledged to visit again his old friends in Kent, a sudden thought occurred to him that, by starting a few days earlier, he might fulfil also a desire long cherished of visiting France. The fact that one of his former colleagues was stationed at Boulogne, determined him to select that as the place whither he would go. His Journal says :—

**Saturday, July 13th.**—I reached Folkestone. The roughness of the weather forbade all idea of crossing that day. I went to an inn: at our order the waiter brought in tea for me, and for a gentleman I found in the room. When we drew up to the table, I remarked, "You, Sir, probably, if at home, would as I should, ask God's blessing." "Certainly," was the reply. We at once did so there; and the exercise opened straightway to Christian converse. He proved to be a godly man, a Methodist from Sittingbourne, one of the fruits of William Barton's labours in that Circuit. After tea I sought and found a Wesleyan home for the Lord's day.

**Sunday, July 14th.**—I preached twice in the chapel, and once on the quay.

**Monday, July 15th.**—Brother Buckley, that he might have conversation, took passage to Boulogne, and came along with me.

Vain thought! That projected talk has place only in the list of good intentions. A fresh breeze and a rolling sea found for them, as it generally does for landmen, other employment. They, like most occasional seagoers, were pleased to reach shore. It is an old experience :—"Then are they glad because they be quiet." Mr. Collins says :—"Coast, houses, and people, all reminded me of Orkney, except that both French houses and French people have much more paint." On inquiry, it was found that the Minister, Mr. Lyon, unaware of Mr. Collins's coming, had gone away to England on business. After a short stay Mr. Collins returned to Dover, where with good success he preached. In the prayer-meeting, the Communion rail was surrounded by anxious inquirers. A note says :—"The noise of battle scared mine host; he fled the field, leaving me to find my way home through the dark streets as best I might. However, bless the Lord! souls were saved."

A letter to Mrs. Collins, dated Thursday, July 18th, says:—"How comfortable railway travelling: This country is full of conveniences. I left Dover at nine, reached here (Ashford) at ten. R., with whom I am staying a few hours, appears delighted to see me again; flies about to serve me; and whistles and sings from room to room for very gladness of heart.

"This Ashford would be no undesirable place to labour in. Mr. Betts has built a good chapel; the hearers as yet are few, but important villages, with no Methodism in them, lie all around. One Preacher cannot supply the town and work the country too; but if, as I think they might, they would take two Ministers, much might be done. However, we will not, dear Em, speculate about the field of our labour. The determination of my heart, with which I know you sympathize, is, wherever I may be, to live nearer to Christ, and more for Him than ever."

At two o'clock of that day, Mr. Collins started to Rye, where his old friend Austen met him, and drove him to his home at Brede. The Diary of the next day says:—"How lovely is this part of our land! It is specially pleasant to me; hereabout many souls have been given me of the Lord; and they stand—O that is the joy! they stand fast. This day I have visited some sick; finished a tract that I am about to publish; found sweet manifestation of the Lord in a quiet wood; delivered an address at Staplecross; conducted a prayer-meeting, and seen lost sinners brought home to God."

Sunday, July 21st.—I rose at five; and in solemn prayer obtained sure token of a day of power. The morning service was edifying. In the afternoon, while I exhorted and conducted a prayer-meeting, the young seemed wonderfully moved. At night the work went on. Many stony hearts were melted.

Monday, July 22nd.—Before I could leave Wightwick's, with whom I lodged, I was obliged to have prayer with some young people in distress. It pleased God to set free Mr. W's eldest son Humphrey, the servant, two other children, one of Standen's sons and many more. Tompsett fetched me to Ticehurst, where I had good success in the ingathering of souls.

Tuesday, July 23rd.—I met some promising young people at Tompsett's, and set out at midday for Tunbridge Wells. Brother Philp met me. He and I were in London together as Missionary

candidates. It was very pleasant to talk over old affairs. I preached and had fruit.

Wednesday, July 24th.—I set forth on my return journey. I should like very well to travel again in these parts. I believe that God would kindle again the ancient flame. In London I called at my dear wife's mother's house, she being ill. As I praised Christ, and commended Him unto her, she said earnestly, "I build on no other." A late train brought me safely to Coventry a little after midnight.

Thursday, July 25th.—I prayed in the cell of a convict. The unhappy man was once devout, but became neglectful, lost good, fell into vice, went on from bad to worse, until here he is, a felon in gaol, condemned to two years' imprisonment. He writhes under the degradation, feels the bitterness of sin, and seems truly penitent before God.

Friday, July 26th.—I visited a very poor, but very precious woman in our infirmary. On leaving I said, "The Lord be with you." "He will," she replied. But soon after, much sooner than we thought, the word of release was given, and she has happily gone to be with Him.

Tuesday, July 30th.—Hearing that my dear wife's mother was worse, we went up to Clapham together. She has for some time been fully aware of her approaching end, and has set herself with becoming seriousness to be found ready. We were cheered by many comfortable signs of preparation of heart. On Thursday, we took our leave, as it proved, to see her face no more until the morning of the resurrection.

Upon his return Mr. Collins went on to the Conference at Birmingham. Dr. Bunting, for the fourth time, presided. Tranquility and prosperity had marked the year: the increase was thirteen thousand two hundred and thirty-two. By a new arrangement the forenoon of Wednesday, August 7th, was set apart for the ordination service. The Annual Address says:—"God was remarkably present. A large and devout congregation appeared to be inspired with one common sentiment of awe, delight, and love. To the young men, and to their fathers and brethren, that ordination was a means of grace. The universal resolve seemed to be that 'holiness unto the Lord' should be our motto; our one great business, the salvation of souls; and the concentrated theme of our ministry, 'Christ crucified.' The blessedness of that season of power can never be forgotten by any who enjoyed it. We doubt whether a more solemn, holy, and glorious service has ever been witnessed in Methodism. Mr. Collins writes, "The

Charge was excellent. Immediately upon their ordination the fifty-seven partook of the Lord's Supper; after them all the Ministers present did so. In that holy Communion my soul was subdued, humbled, and refreshed exceedingly."

A large party of Wesleyan excursionists came up by special train from Bristol and Gloucester. They had contrived a Breakfast Meeting in the town hall, quite calculating upon it being unquestionable that a word would bring the magnates of the Connexion to meet them there. The work devolving upon<sup>x</sup> Conference is too large to leave leisure; the time for it, too limited to permit postponement; the character of it, too grave to allow any other thing precedence. The Conference therefore resolved that its own duties must go on without regard to the programme of the pleasure-seekers. The next morning, so soon as devotions were ended, Dr. Bunting, somewhat sternly inquired, "Is any Preacher present who took part in the town hall Breakfast Meeting?" Chivalrously, A. E. Farrar, with courage equal to martyrdom, rose, and said, "I did." "Then," said the President, with the driest humour, "you are to preach at Wesley Chapel to night." This atonement by special service to-day, for lack of service yesterday, was a doom so oddly, yet adroitly given, that to those who had opened their ears for a specimen of severe rebuke from the famed disciplinarian who occupied the chair, the surprise was ludicrous. The victim so cleverly trapped saw clearly, in the amused look of the brotherhood, that all chance of successful appeal was hopeless: he therefore, gracefully, as his manner was, subsided at once into submission, and the Conference set pleasantly to its work.

Sunday, August 29th.—I preached at Dawley: souls were saved. It grieves me to have allowed one chance to slip. Two people who took tea with me were much affected as we sat at table: expecting to see them in the prayer-meeting, to which it turned out that they were not able to stop, I did not give immediate attention to their case. O, why did I not bring them to their knees at once? My host remembered Mr. Fletcher. He heard the good man tell his school-master, "Were I not a Minister of the Gospel, I would choose to be a teacher of youth."

Friday, September 27th.—In a wood, on the way to Balsall, I

obtained audience of the King. My spirit has been cast down of late. The illness of several Leaders, the age of some, and the neglect of others, has impeded the work. There are not many fathers, "who naturally care" for souls. I am pressed with anxiety for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the thousands of the unconverted around. May God help with His glorious riches of power?

Sunday, October 13th.—Among those who found mercy were a poor tramp and a drunkard, who confessed to me that he had come thither from the alehouse.

Sunday, October 20th.—In the morning heard Dr. Harris, author of the prize essay on "Mammon." The sermon from "Lord, what is man?" was a most finished production. He did not seem well. His reading, beautifully correct, lacked the power which, I am told, he is usually able to throw into it.

Friday, October 25th.—In special services at Stourport many sinners were won home to Christ. One aged man of ninety years impressed me much by the simple fervour with which I found him saying over and over again the Apostles' Creed.

Sunday, October 27th.—A dozen found the Lord last night; among them two poor lost girls from the street. They were brought by one who had been of their own class, but whom the Lord had rescued some while ago. How her eyes glistened while they prayed! As the meeting closed, D. said to me, "I have all the week been looking forward to, and praying about, this day. So concerned was I that last night it filled my head, as is usual in dreams, with thoughts turned to whimsies. I saw you fishing. 'What,' said I, with surprise, 'fishing on Sunday?' 'The best of all days for my fishing,' you replied. It has made me very glad to-night to see how your net has prospered." As this recital was finished, a stout, fresh-looking countryman, who had been made gloriously happy in God, came to shake hands with me before he went. Wishing to secure him for a class, I asked his name, "Salmon. John Salmon, Sir." This coincidence of name and dream was so odd and unexpected that it amused me exceedingly.

About this time Mr. Collins wrote to me, then a Student at the Institution, the following:—"I expect you to do well. I know that you will aim to accomplish something for God and for man. Such purposes please God. Have a horror of sinking into a tattling, twaddling, trivial sort of man, talking much and achieving nothing. Now is your time. Put conscience into your work. Throw away no opportunities. Nothing less than ceaseless diligence will satisfy your tutors, there, in your studies, and your friends when you revisit home, in your sermons. Steer clear of the young man's rock, self-importance. Walk humbly with God. Acts of self-condemnation are, next to acts of faith in Christ, the



most profitable of devotional exercises. I have grown best and done best when most frequent in them."

Another letter, soon after, said:—"Bring all your spiritual strength to the grasp of the promises. All of them bear the image and superscription of Christ: in Him they are all Amen. Believe them, and you will bear His image too. By intensely beholding them, with the look of faith, you will get both a true conception and a real possession of Christ. When His indwelling becomes to us a reality and an experience, then have we perfect love; then are we filled with all the fulness of God."

Upon my writing to this "master in Israel," to explain to me more at length the meaning of that phrase, "the fulness of God," he wrote:—"God is light; God is love; fulness of God is, therefore, fulness of knowledge and love. Not such a fulness as we shall have in heaven; for that mortality could not bear. Not such a fulness as would make us cease to think and feel as men; not such a fulness as would supersede effort in doing the Divine will; but a fulness which interpenetrates God's will with all, and makes His glory the end of all. The soul is the fulness of the body, actuating each part; God is the fulness of the soul; raising it, that there be nothing low; filling it up, that there be no painful want; filling it out, that there be no ugly wrinkle. The sea-plants lie flat, flabby, and formless, when the tide is out; but when that returns, they rise, and stand, and beautifully wave themselves amid the vitalizing element; every stem full, every leaf full, every pore and vessel full. Thus is it with believers when flowed around and flowed into by the fulness of God. A heart enriched with this plenitude does more than occasionally advert to God, or draw near to Him at times, as a duty or a necessity: God is its atmosphere, its abode. The apprehension of Him is abiding; the reference to Him habitual; the help from Him unceasing. Into that soul Jehovah brings the court and kingdom of heaven, and makes it the wonder and the admiration of the very angels."

The Diary of February 10th, 1845, says:—"I went, by invitation, to meet Sir Andrew Agnew at Lady

Carnegie's. What a holy zeal he has for the Lord's day! It delighted me to learn also that the heir of his house addicts himself to the work of the ministry; is very devoted, and, like young Burns, goes about earnestly labouring to promote revivals."

Family affection in Mr. Collins was intense. Enlargement on a virtue so common is unnecessary. We need but say that, using the word in all its deep, tender strength of meaning, he was a father. He stood in the parent's place with a parent's heart. A visitor, describing the members of that happy Coventry home, wrote of the babe:—"Tommy is a winning little fellow. None can help loving him, so unusually sweet is his smile." This charming child, the only son, be sure was well beloved. About this time it pleased God to reclaim this precious boon. Providence generally breaks bereavements to us gradually; lets there be visible approaches of dissolution, lest the mind should be crushed by a sudden blow. So, months before this infant was removed, I read of him in peril:—"March 8th, 1844.—All Wednesday night my dear little son was restless; through Thursday, though every effort was made by the doctor, he grew worse. Little hope of life seemed left. I retired to my study, and begged for my boy, if the Lord could trust me with him. Such, however, was my sense of unfitness to sustain so weighty a charge, and such my faith in God's wisdom in dealing, that though the struggle cost me many tears, I put him unreservedly into the hands of the Lord. Great sweetness filled my soul, and I was enabled sincerely to say, 'Thy will be done.'" At that time the child was restored. A little incident preserved in a letter to Mrs. Collins shows how the memory of this trial affected him four months after:—"I called on a bookseller to purchase a book to bring home for my dear little readers. I found the man sad, and his wife in tears. That morning a lovely girl had been taken from them. 'Ah! Sir,' said the father, 'we do not know how much we love them till we lose them.' '*We do not lose them,*' I replied. But, dear Em, as I uttered those words of comfort, I wept in memory of the bitterness of our own struggle and grief when we feared similar desolation of the home. Let us

be careful to train our children for God ; then, if He call us to such exercises, He will help us in them." The fear came, and the help. " Sunday, April 30th, 1845.—This is a day of mourning. Sorrow hath taken hold upon me. The Lord has been pleased to call away my lovely boy. He left us, as in a sweet sleep, about ten o'clock last night. His closing sigh was breathed upon my face. At his birth I solemnly dedicated the child to God, and I know that God accepted him. It was my strong desire that he should be a Minister ; he will, but in the upper sanctuary. The Lord mercifully upholds while He smites. May this heavy stroke be sanctified."

This bereavement was deeply felt, but with a thankful not a murmuring sorrow. This was well shown in a touching incident artlessly told in a letter to his little girl:—"Yesterday I heard Dr. Bunting preach for Missions, at the Centenary Hall. I was getting half-a-crown for the collection, when he asked, 'Are they little things the Lord has done for you? Are they little things you hope the Lord will yet do for you?' At those words I remembered that He had taken dear Tommy to everlasting glory ; and that I wished Him, in due time, to take us all thither. At these words my silver turned to gold."

When Mr. Collins went up to London, to the Missionary Anniversary, he also attended the Conference convened to oppose the endowment of the Popish College of Maynooth. A memorable sermon, from Rev. xix. 14, on Christ leading forth His armies, with another about the three Hebrew confessors, preached upon his return, taught his people strong truth in strong old English Protestant form. His congregations sent up petitions, which, at a personal interview, he deposited in the hands of Williams, the well known economist M.P. for Coventry. He says:—I found him able, and was received with courtesy. But the religious argument seemed to have no weight whatever with him. Like the majority of mere politicians, *on grounds of expediency*, he inclined to vote for the endowment." The Act passed. Nor will Maynooth sink until, perhaps, Irish Establishment, Grant, and *Regium Donum*, crash down together.

How strongly Mr. Collins felt, the following letter will show :—

*To the President of the Conference.*

COVENTRY, August 9th, 1845.

REVEREND SIR,—

WHEN the Maynooth Bill passed, I was much pressed in spirit to submit to your honoured predecessor whether it would not be becoming for our Connexion publicly to mark its sense of that national sin by the appointment of a day for confession, humiliation, and deprecation.

Fear of being intrusive has restrained me. I have waited, assuring myself that, if such a course be really needful and wise, as in my eyes it seems to be, some of those who usually guide so prudently our public action would suggest the thing.

Apprehending now, as it is so near the close of Conference, that in hurry of affairs the thought might not occur, it appeared to me to be my duty thus to raise the point. It being now before you, —without taking your time by urging it, —I leave the matter to your superior judgment, and remain.

With respectful affection,

Yours truly,

THOMAS COLLINS.

*Rev. Jacob Stanley.*

The Pastoral Address of the year has in it Protestant witness of rare force and value. Defending the attitude taken by Methodism, it says:—"Towards the adherents of Rome, as men and as fellow-citizens, we entertain a cordial good will; but to the corrupt and corrupting system of which they are at once the votaries and the victims, we are irreconcilably hostile. We cannot forget that during the reign of Popery in this land our sovereigns were vassals, the Bible was a sealed book, and free discussion on matters pertaining to salvation a crime punishable with death. The laws of God and the decisions of our courts of justice were made void by priestly absolution and Papal indulgences; the preaching of the Gospel was substituted by the narration of foolish legends and lying wonders; ceremonies the most unscriptural, opinions the most mischievous, and assumptions the most despotic, were forced upon our forefathers by the terrors of the dungeon, the rack, and the stake. That the principles of the system are unchanged, its deeds declare, and its advocates boastfully assert: and that it retains its ancient spirit of proscrip-

tion and persecution, recent transactions in Piedmont, Madeira, Tahiti, and Ireland, but too fully prove. Of forbearance and toleration this system knows nothing, except as expedients for concentrating its energies, and selecting its opportunity to crush its unsuspecting prey. It complains of oppression wherever it is restrained from acting the oppressor; and it would scorn *mere equality* with other forms of Christianity, as certainly as it now lays claim to universal supremacy. While it proclaims itself the only true church and the centre of unity, it has, more than all other churches, corrupted the purity of Divine worship, departed from the truth as it is in Jesus, and violated the peace and charity of the Gospel. As a *system*, it turns the house of God into a temple of idols; it dignifies a 'wafer' with the titles of our Saviour, and adores it in His stead; it seats the Pope on the throne, and invests him with the headship of Christ; nay, it practically neutralizes His atonement, and disparages His entire mediation, by ascribing to sacraments a *necessary* efficacy, and to saints and angels the attributes of intercessors. It has often imbrued its hands in the blood of saints; it dispenses with the moral obligation of vows; it absolves from sin, and commutes its punishment in the eternal world. It is, we verily believe, that gigantic personification of evil which the spirit of inspiration characterizes as 'that man of sin, the son of perdition, who exalteth himself above all that is called God; whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.'"

Coventry cherishes and commemorates a well-known—but little credible—legend of the wife of its old Saxon Earl. The improbable story of her riding *in puris naturalibus* is mentioned by no known writer earlier than Matthew of Westminster. Leofric died in 1057; Matthew was living in 1307,—two hundred and fifty years after. The pageant which has given unenviable notoriety to the city, no way proves the veracity of the tale, seeing that its observance can be traced no further back than to the licentious days of the second Charles. But the very authorities relied on for the history condemn the immodesty of the celebration.

The citizens of Leofric's days, more decent than their sons, retired to their homes, closed their windows, and left to the nude lady the empty streets. One only of all their number, and he secretly, sought lustfully to feast his eyes. The Godiva story makes the name of that shameless man a by-word, and his fate a warning. If the narrative be a fiction, their procession is a folly; but if it be true, their tradition rebukes their deed. The crowd of libidinous gazers disgrace their sires. Fuller says:—"The good Countess took order that her charity should not prejudice her modesty." Let those who commemorate her name imitate her care.

Mr. Collins believed the tale to be a lie; knew the celebration to be obscene, fit only for a city of satyrs; and set himself to protest against it as a public scandal. He says:—"Paul found 'beasts at Ephesus;' I have found some here, and have had a sharp battle to fight with them concerning their old, bad, lewd, Lady Godiva custom." His opposition was vigorous. He printed two thousand tracts; addressed every Minister of religion; memorialized the Mayor; circulated six thousand copies of an Appeal; wrote to Her Majesty's Judges of Assize; and communicated with the Bishop of the diocese. The letter to the Bishop I append:—

UPPER WELL STREET, COVENTRY, *November 6th, 1844.*

*To the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Worcester.*

MY LORD,

YOUR great courtesy, together with your distinguished name as a lover of good men, and as an advocate of the interests of religion and morality, emboldens me, an obscure Wesleyan Minister, to beg your attention awhile.

By the standing regulation of my own community, none of its Ministers may remain in one station longer than three years. The working of this rule has cast my lot in various parts of this kingdom; and, of course, wherever I have been, the state of public morals has been a subject of careful observation by me. Having now lived—with plentiful opportunity of knowledge—more than two years in this city, I am compelled—sorrowfully—to bear witness that want of family discipline, laxity of morals, and general licentiousness, mark this locality more than any other in which I have ever dwelt.

This "superfluity of naughtiness," may have many causes; but, at this time, I beg to bring under the notice of your Lordship an old, but base and hurtful, custom, disgracing this place; to which, it appears to me, much of the evil may be debited; the only use and

tendency of which, so far as I can see, is to familiarize the young mind with lewdness, and keep in countenance the vilest excesses.

Once in three years, in May or June, there is, what is called, "a grand procession," professedly in honour of a lady who is reported to have rendered services to the citizens many ages ago. The historic value of the well-known story, your Lordship will better judge of than I can; be it truth or fable, it is made, by unprincipled people, the occasion of the perpetration of a most monstrous indecency.

Persons are sent to select and to hire a prostitute from the stews of Birmingham, Leicester, or some other neighbouring town: she is brought to the City Hall, stripped, and put into a flesh-coloured dress, sewn upon her so tightly as to show her entire form; she is then—if any shame yet live in her—plied with liquor until, womanhood drowned, she dares to face the crowd. When impudence thus aided has mastered every blush, the degraded creature is lifted upon a horse, and led for hours amid the gaze of thousands through the city streets.

The taste of the people has become so depraved that, not content with the triennial abomination, they, in July last, got up, at Spon End, an intervening one. Nor, I regret to say, could the Corporation be moved to discountenance this extra enormity, which, initiated by the class of people who live upon the folly and extravagance of their neighbours, had not even the pitiable excuse of use and wont to defend it.

I need not suggest to your Lordship of what evil tendency such exhibitions must be. They are, I feel assured, a terrible barrier to religious improvement here. Clergymen and others may preach like angels about sobriety and chastity; but the coming forth of this drunken harlot, with splendid equipage and public acknowledgment, at intervals Satanically adjusted to catch attention of each youthful generation as it rises, must, to a fearful extent, nullify the effect of their labours.

My Lord, I know that you love the souls of the young; thousands of whom, guided by your own Church, have vowed to renounce the vanities of the world, the works of the devil, and the sinful lusts of the flesh. I know that it will be in your heart to do all in your power to remove this great temptation, and to preserve their youth in Christian purity. I know that you will wish this revel—disgraceful even if its scene were in a heathen city—no longer to blot your diocese. I know that you care for the vast multitudes practically lost to Christianity; and that you desire to remove the hindrances out of the way of their return to virtuous living and to the fold of Christ. I venture, therefore, to hope that your Lordship, with the high authority of your great name and place, will, in some manner, express disapprobation of this iniquity.

At Coventry, long custom has in this regard so lowered public sentiment that every expectation of successful opposition to this hateful thing lies in the hope that good, wise, and weighty persons away from us may, by utterance of their judgment, awake the respectable inhabitants to a sense of the discredit and humiliation which this disgusting affair brings upon this city in the eyes of all England.

Not vanity, my Lord, not impertinence, has led me to this intrusion upon your time ; but a feeble degree of the same desire for God's glory and the good of precious souls which, I am persuaded, your Lordship also feels, and will know how to appreciate.

My Lord,

I have the honour to be

Your Lordship's very obedient humble servant,

THOMAS COLLINS.

The distinguished persons with whom Mr. Collins held correspondence upon this subject so sanctioned his views, that the traffickers in vice found it unusually difficult to raise funds. This stirred the lower sort to anger. One night, returning from an appointment, Mr. Collins found a tree cast across the road with pretty clear intention of throwing down his horse. Another day, foolish fellows paraded his effigy before his own door, and then burned it in the street. He was made the subject of many lampoons ; but these things disturbed him not. His diary says :—"Man can do nothing but what shall turn to my good. 'Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you.' The friendship of the world is dangerous ; the enmity of it, safe. It weakens my affection for the world, and sets me on my guard ; it calls into exercise the grace of charity and the practice of patience ; it meetens me for heaven, and lightens my reward. Welcome, then, the fellowship of my Saviour's sufferings ! I shall soon sit with Him on His throne, and all the storm be overpast. But it is not all loss now. The ungodly hate me ; but I have had many proofs of increased respect from all for whose respect I have the slightest care."

Though not entirely successful, the cause of decorum gained much. Bishop, and Judge, and Minister of State all made such communications that the Mayor was strengthened to refuse the armour and the city hall, except upon engagement given by the Committee that no indecency should be permitted.

When the day arrived, it rained so heavily that the start of the procession had to be delayed from eleven until three. The weather cleared ; off they went ; but, long ere their programme was fulfilled, a storm, unusually heavy, scattered the drenched multitude, to rally no



more. Not a few of the wet and muddy fugitives declared, as they went home, that "*it all came of old Collins's prayers.*"

Mr. Collins, in his Journal, writes :—" May 26th. The procession was attempted. The lady, I hear, was, this time, not a harlot, but an actress; and was decently dressed; a fact which, I am told, occasioned not a little murmuring among those who, moved by vile curiosity, had come miles to see the accustomed sight. They said she was 'no Godiva at all.' But, O, what rains! Surely God looked out of the cloud. He troubled His enemies. May He raise up men to resist this sin until it be annihilated!"

"June 24th.—My dear sister, E. M. Graham, left us to day. Her company has refreshed, and her zeal in the cause of Christ edified, me. She visited our schools on the Lord's day. Twice she has been with me to the workhouse; and all through the week her labours in the houses of the poor have been incessant. She has given tracts, books, good counsels, and kind words, in abundance."

A correspondent writes me thus :—" The name of the Rev. Thomas Collins will ever be dear to me. Twenty-three years ago I lived in a village on the outskirts of the Coventry Circuit. I was but a boy; but the pleasure with which we anticipated his visits is very fresh in my mind to this day. His custom was to ride over early in the afternoon, and give some hours to visitation, not by any means confined to Wesleyans, but from house to house. It was my privilege to be his first guide to the sick; and well do I remember how, with his hand on my head, he talked with me of my soul. In a little time he needed no guide, but really knew the inhabitants better than many who lived in the place. His benevolence was unbounded, and his sympathy with the poor and suffering very tender. The people loved him, and, whenever he came, flocked to hear him."

Only with large interval between does God make men in the mould out of which St. Paul and John Wesley came. They seemed effective at everything. This catholicity of power is not the endowment of every man. Let each be true to his Lord, and to his gift. Variety of

vocation is undeniable ; but variety is not opposition. "Wisdom is justified of all her children." I admire the faithful work of Mr. Collins ; but I would not, therefore, draw the patient scholar from collating mss. ; nor set the profound thinker marshalling night by night the array of penitent prayer-meetings ; nor clip the page of the mighty divine to send him hunting laggards from class in scattered cottages. Sir Astley Cooper, while writing a "*Vade mecum*" for surgeons, would accomplish more than if that time had all been spent in setting broken bones. It was worth while locking Paul up in gaol to get his prison Epistles out of him. The debility—then mourned—which gave John Wesley leisure to pen his "Notes" will yield larger harvest than strength through all those months to go "gospelling" twice a day could have reaped.

Methodism does its best to train its Ministers as "servants of all work." Wesleyan Theological Tutors have all been Pastors. May it never be otherwise ! Theory, unsobered by necessity of practical application, is a great source of German scepticism. Who would trust the therapeutics of one who never healed ? Medical professors reach their chairs through hospital wards. According to Wesleyan usage our "masters in Israel" have to do similarly. This is wise. We would reject a man, though he could unfold the Creed learnedly as Pearson, unless we knew that he could apply it also to the cure of souls simply, as did the old Monk of Erfurt his "I believe in the forgiveness of sins" to the comfort of "Frater" Martin.

They who direct an age's intellect are more potent, though, to the eye, less active, than those who do its deeds. He who could purge a fever-breathing atmosphere would well affect the national health more than the hardest-working parish doctor, though his case-book were filled with notices of typhoid patients successfully treated. The messenger who effectually bears the word of mercy to a stricken soul heals a man ; but the great Reformer, who in God's name protested against the Papal lie, sent currents of health half across a continent. Polemics like Athanasius and Luther, divines like Augustine and Richard Watson, have a usefulness which no Quarterly Meeting statistics can register.

We say these things to rebuke persons to whom doctrine cleared, the Word expounded, duty enforced, and instruction in righteousness given, are all nothing unless they have an accompaniment of cries and groans; who can discern no good unless it be declared amid the hal-lu-lu-jahs of a congregation. This is wrong.

On the other hand, one has known men—respectably frosty men—inanities, that never missed an aspirate, and never smote a conscience; men feebly elegant; too impotent to think for the age, and too genteel to work for it; too unimportant to guide its clergy, and too listless to move its people. The contempt with which these ciphers in orders—who must be excused from saving souls because they have to polish sentences—look down upon earnest evangelists as only “noisy revivalists” is a small matter, not further to be noticed; assuredly not generated in its subjects by any special plethora of brain.

Mr. Collins occasionally endured this disdain, but never retorted it; never allowed himself to be stung by it into denunciation of culture; an error into which some men of his class have almost equally fallen. He always disliked that onesidedness which arrays men of thought and men of action against each other. Very concentrated in his methods, he was yet very expansive in his affections. He deeply revered scholars, theologians, and men of ruling, administrative, executive gifts. He held in high esteem all who, in any true way, fill life with faithful endeavours for Christ.

The narrative of these three years furnishes proof that, though not less evangelical than when, a fire-souled boy, he was busy calling sinners of Wark to repentance, yet much larger conceptions of the field of action had opened before him. The work committed to him had grown in his view: it was more manifold than at first it seemed. Two elements, life through, constituted the noticeable character of Mr. Collins's ministry; he was to the last, the evangelist, and the unfaltering witness for holiness. But now, and henceforth, he felt it to be also within his vocation to deal with errors of the time, to give verdict on public questions, and to smite at fashionable sins. All this, bravely and notably;

he had done in Coventry. He went thither in the name of the Lord, and the Lord stood by him. In the city, the school was enlarged, the chapel cleaned, an organ put into it, and vestries added. In the Circuit, debts were paid, new sanctuaries built, and languishing Societies revived. He joyously and thankfully says:—“I found three hundred members, I am leaving five hundred and twenty; I found bankruptcy, I leave comfort; I found a small congregation and a church cast down, I leave a chapel well filled, and a set of well-ordered workers, and Methodism standing in the city firmer and higher than it ever did before.”

## CHAPTER X

### ST. ALBAN'S.

At the Conference of 1845 Mr. Collins was appointed to St. Albans. He wrote to his father:—"We arrived here on Thursday, August 28th. The house being small, I have taken another. It is roomy, and has a good garden. The lawn at the back, just the thing for the recreation of my little girls, is perfectly private. It will cost me considerably, but health and comfort are more than cash. This place has not yet full hold of me: Coventry is scarcely off my mind. Christ, and Christ alone, can keep all Circuits and all men on His heart at once. Things are low. The Circuit debt is £60. Several chapel cases are deplorable. The Societies are faint. On my first Sabbath at Rickmansworth I rose and went to the early prayer-meeting; there were present but two young women and two children. I wept over the desolation, and the young people wept with me. May the Lord remember our tears! I shall study and labour to promote a revival; that once come, other things will amend."

"This country is barren ground for Methodism; yet I doubt not that here also Christ will give me fruit. My sermons, hitherto, have been chiefly to believers, of whom some appear to have got a little warming."

"The sects are, in these parts, unusually friendly. I have just attended a Bible Society Committee, at which, while I presided, a Clergyman and a Baptist Minister acted as Secretaries."

"Yesterday, Emmy and I, and a little party, went up to survey the country from the top of the tower of our fine old Abbey. The scene from thence is very wide

and rich. St. Alban, our patron saint, was first and famous among British martyrs. This is a pleasant town, and an ancient one. Before Christ was upon earth, and before London was founded, there was a city upon this spot. Here Boadicea, the British Queen, fought the Romans. From this place Lord Bacon, the Prince of Philosophers, got the title of his peerage; near here he wrote his greatest works; and in one of our churches he lies buried."

"Wednesday, October 1st.—At Shenley a poor woman, after listening awhile at the door, could not contain herself, but rushed into the chapel with uplifted hands and streaming eyes. Her deep sorrow moved many; her bitter cries for mercy stopped the preaching, but set us in a flame of prayer.

"Sunday, October 5th.—At St. Alban's. I was very unwell; tried with toothache and burdened with cold. The Lord knew my infirmity, and descended upon the congregation with His own power. He is my Master: I am His Minister. He will go on, and I will follow."

The next day Mr. Collins lost his pain by losing his tooth—a fact which, in order to puzzle and please his little girls, he commemorated in the following poetical enigma:—

A certain good servant went into his place,  
And gave his young master a pain in the face;  
Then stuck to his person, whatever occur'd,  
And rendered assistance at every word.  
He agreed with the neighbours, obeyed his lord's will;  
He worked like a grinder shut up in a mill;  
Most active at table, then mounting on guard,  
He stood like a sentinel silent and hard.  
Whatever they gave him, though strange it may seem,  
He return'd to his master to benefit him.  
In the midst of his duties he fell to decay,  
Or his master not ever had sent him away.  
Now tell me the name of this servant so true,  
For some of his family wait upon you.

I will illustrate the course of Mr. Collins's labours and experiences at this time, as much as possible, by citations of his own epistles and diaries.

A letter, dated November 19th, says:—"Bramford and Buckley work with me well, but the people are unim-

pressible ; hard work yields small result. Last Sunday I rose at five, prayed in my chamber until the hour of the morning prayer-meeting, then went there and conducted it. During the day I addressed the Sunday scholars ; preached three times ; held a general prayer-meeting in the chapel ; and, last of all, a special one for anxious persons in a room close by. Some were moved, yet the whole day did not afford a single clear case of conversion. I shall not rest until I am surrounded by penitents. O cry to God with me for this."

" Friday, November 21st.—O my God, I humbly seek Thy face for this Circuit, and for my own soul. Why does my poor net take so few ? I pray for my people, and I abase myself before Thee, O Lord. O come to my help."

A letter to me, dated December 6th, says, " We are improving ; gently, slowly, yet we are improving. When, as a visitor, I go out to a place, I have only salvation work to do ; but a Superintendent going the round of his Circuit, specially if the Circuit be in difficulties, cannot act as a mere evangelist : foundations have to be examined, institutions kept in order, and finances looked after. Nevertheless, as opportunity serves, I try as hard as ever for the conversion of souls. A few solitary stalks of corn have been plucked ; but the harvest is not ripe, the time of sheaves is not come. I have had new lessons to learn in every Circuit hitherto, and new ones lies before me here. It is all right. May each lesson my Master sets me be welcome ! "

" Sunday, December 7th.—My subject was ' the baptism of fire.' The Lord enabled me to speak strong words. I was led to tell my people that they must move, or I must leave.

" Thursday, December 11th.—I preached in behalf of the trust at Sleep's Hide ; in the prayer-meeting, at my wish, all the people gathered upon one side : then, calling forth from among them such as desired pardon, or longed for perfect love, I marshalled them in separate groups. We fell to prayer, and good work was done.

" Sunday, December 14th.—At Nash Mills I rose at

three: God graciously met me. The overshadowing glory accompanied me all day."

Another letter to me, dated Hertford, December 17th, says, "The chapel here was perfumed with the presence of the Holy Spirit last night. In the prayer-meeting we were filled with emotion. Some were set free, and others filled with holy love. There will be a work in Hertford and Hertfordshire yet. I have a happy, quiet rest in God for this. I know that He is about to bless my Circuit. Let us know Christ in His death, in His resurrection, and in His ascension. Dwell deep, dwell n God, my dear Samuel."

On Monday, December 29th, the Quarterly Meeting of the Local Preachers was held. With all possible good speed the usual routine was gone through; then Mr. Collins addressed these helpers of his evangelistic efforts; after which all joined with their Ministers in a solemn act of dedication, followed by commemoration of the holy Supper. The record is, "It was a most refreshing time."

A letter says, "The people generally are sluggish; they will not stir. Yet, despite prevailing hardness and pride, the Lord has let us see His conquering power. We add forty this quarter. I must try yet more decided means. Sinners are in peril, I must plunge into the wave after them. Through mercy, I am strong in body and fixed in soul. By God's grace, I will apply myself to God's work. I mean to allow myself no rest until all the towns and villages included in the wide span of my Circuit have been blessed with revival."

The year 1846 was in St. Alban's well and lovingly commenced. Congregationalists, Baptists, Primitives, and Wesleyans all united in religious services. In the morning there was a meeting for prayer in the Independent chapel; in the evening a combined communion in the Wesleyan chapel. Several of the Ministers present were so overpowered by hallowed feeling as to be scarcely able to proceed.

At Mr. Collins's request, I, being then a Student at Richmond, went down to take the first service of a special series which commenced on Sunday, January 18th. It was a Sabbath of much power and marked



success. I have not forgotten the day, nor, while memory holds her seat, can I ever forget the night. Weary and happy, I retired to rest in my holy kinsman's house. Soon asleep, I dreamed a horrid dream. "A dream! what will you tell us next?" Stay, gentle critic. It did me, and may do others, good enough to pay for space and ink. I thought I died. Instead of finding myself in heaven,—resistlessly sinking, I entered a gloomy vault, where countenances, stamped with hopeless despair, surrounded me. "Where am I?" "In hell," a hollow voice replied. "And are these sad souls to be my everlasting companions?" "Nay, nay," was answered in the same sepulchral tone, "lower down, lower down than this for unfaithful Ministers?" Those pitiless words awoke me. Psychologists could, no doubt, explain this freak of fancy by many a subtle mental law; association of ideas by contrast; suggestion by opposites, or the like. I troubled myself with no philosophy, but just thanked God for a warning, cast myself and all my poor doings of the day upon Jesus, and sank away to happier slumbers. It is no fiction that of all hells a fallen Minister's would prove most terrible. That dream enshrines within its grim symbology a tremendous truth. At many a thought of it I have cried, "Lord, keep me!" and tell it here that it may wake like prayer in others. Taught fidelity, the Lord had yet another lesson for me. The converts of the day had been numbered, and my heart had, perhaps, secretly, counted on them as seals attesting me. On the Tuesday next ensuing, a letter came to hand, written by a godly, but retiring, person; reading thus :—"I know you had on Sabbath a good day. So drawn out in prayer on your behalf was I that I rose from my knees assured of your success." As I perused that epistle, "Ah!" thought I, "how little we know at whose call the power that wrought the wonders fell." Thus I learned that much achievement of the Church is born in closets where unofficed, unordained, unnoticed people pray. When the just Judge gives crowns at last, some of the very brightest will, doubtless, flash on unexpected brows.

Of the after course of these services Mr. Collins wrote me thus :—"They have much pleased me. Of the

Lord's day you know. I may say, however, that so abundant was the grace of God, that the children of that day seemed of the stature of men before the close of the week. On Monday I preached about the day of Pentecost. In the prayer-meeting I, first of all, summoned the labourers; a little swarm of preachers, teachers, and leaders, surrounded me. We earnestly besought the Lord for a Pentecostal 'Fire Baptism' upon ourselves. The scene was solemn; earth seemed to tremble under us. When it appeared that each soul was saturated with pure, deep, holy feeling, I bade the workers rise, and do God's will upon the congregation. At a word, they poured themselves over the chapel, and soon returned, each man in charge of some stricken one. Mightier demonstration of the Spirit I never knew. In the strength of that meat we went through the week. The six o'clock meetings were full every morning. On Saturday we had a public fellowship meeting. At the door, I myself took the names of fifty, who during the course of that blessed week have professed to have found the Lord. Many women have cast off Babylonish garments. Set free, they have set to work. Some promise exceedingly well. One young lady, L. P., who a while ago could not speak in a class, said to me with tears, 'Sir, to win a soul I should not mind crying the name of Jesus through St. Alban's streets.' I have lately been delighted with information concerning Dr. Browning, given to me by my dear sister, Maria Graham. He went in April last to Van Diemen's Land, as surgeon in charge of three hundred and twenty-nine convicts. During the voyage, not less than one hundred and fifty-six gave evidence of having experienced salvation through Christ; of the rest, many were seriously concerned, while the conduct of all proved them to be under gracious restraint. The good Doctor set sail with but shattered health. His experience was that each day's strength came with each day's prayers. What a Master is ours! This work in that ship of exiles, among outcasts of men, seems as marvellous to me as anything since Pentecost."

"Monday, February 2nd. On the way to Watford I called upon poor old Wilson, the lock-keeper. He met

me at the door, looking better than usual. I went in and took tea with him. We conversed pleasantly of things of God. At some reference to the name of Jesus:—‘Ah!’ said he, ‘that name charms our fears.’ Those words were his last. As he finished them, his head sank upon his breast, he breathed a heavy sigh; lo, without a fear, and, apparently, without a pang, he was gone. We thought he had fainted,—but no,—he was ‘with the Lord.’ I bore him to his room, and, after prayer, went forward, with strangely solemn feelings, to preach.

“Sunday, February 8th.—I addressed the young converts of St. Alban’s in the afternoon, and distributed them into classes. The Leaders were there. Among them, three, new ones, just appointed to their work. I solemnly committed the lambs to their care.”

A note, written about this time, remarks:—“I have just read Mrs. Fletcher’s Life again. What a remarkable woman she was! In many things how Christ-like! What exemplary self-denial! What love of the poor! It is recorded of one year that in it she spent upon dress but nineteen shillings, while she distributed to the necessitous £180. O that women of our time would follow in this track of simplicity and charity!”

This note recalls my earliest reminiscence of that saintly Minister, John H. Bumby, whose usefulness in Birmingham, through all these years, has had no peer. A gaily dressed person presented herself to him as an anxious inquirer: he told her, that vain attire and sorrow for sin did not agree; that Jesus did not like His servants to go in the world’s livery; then, with her consent, he took the gauds of fashion from her brow, and cast them beneath the Communion table. Mr. Collins’s love for plain apparel was equally primitive and strong. The straw plait district, where so many young girls congregate, and where their employment is clean, light, and fairly remunerative, has, not unnaturally, ever been somewhat remarkable for the dressiness of its women. Mr. Collins both hated and dreaded worldly conformity. It seemed to him the moth and rust of the church. The gewgaws common in female head-gear greatly grieved him. “Here,” he says, “the silly

fashion of bedizening with flowers and gaudy ribbons so prevails, that members—yes, and old ones too—are carried away with it." When he saw an evil, it was impossible for him to keep hands off. He always struck. His exhortations on this matter some despised, but many obeyed. Jewels and flowers were laid aside for the Lord's sake. The members, neat and plain, revived the memory of early Methodist simplicity. Not a few brought to their Pastor the garlands which aforetime had decked their brows. His ingenuity found better use for them. They became the ornaments of a Missionary Maypole. It was rather more than six feet high; and, when tastefully wreathed from top to bottom, though it could not be proud, was exceedingly pretty. A Missionary box formed the base of this trophy of crucified vanities; while a poetical inscription solicited a thank-offering for the triumphs of grace, which during the revival had induced so many to put away what it designated—

Pride that taints the church's youth,  
And shames the church's poor.

It went on to say :—

Better showy trifles here,  
Than twined in ladies locks;  
They could add no beauty there,  
Nor fill the Mission box.  
Men to dress are tempted less,  
But more their gains to hold;  
Sacrifice before their eyes—  
Your dress may gain their gold.

There was a touch of quaint humour in all this; but it impressed young people with a much-needed lesson, and in the Missionary campaign of that year proved to be financially a great success. After a vigorous protest against flowers and finery, delivered during some special services in the Lambeth Circuit, Mr. Collins received the following letter :—

WALWORTH, *March 20th*, 1846.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

HEARING you speak at Vauxhall, upon personal adorning, made me think it right to let you know my experience in the matter. My heart got troubled on the question while pleading in my closet

to be made all that God would have me be. Following of fashion, and conformity to the world, arose before me, burdened my conscience, and gagged my prayer. My spirit did not yield at once. I tried to defend my gold, and jewellery, and dress. I said, 'I have never felt the wearing of them to be a sin; I am sure that I am not proud of them; many excellent persons wear them.' As if in answer to these pleas, the hungry, the naked, the distressed,—who by the cost might have been aided,—with painful vividness seemed to surround me. It came also to mind, that when speaking to a poor unfortunate, my eye had fallen upon her garish array; and that at the time, I had been mournfully stricken with the thought that hankering after finery annually snares hundreds of poor girls into that unhappy path of sin and death. It occurred to me next that fine dresses in the pews shame the poverty-stricken out of the sanctuary. I said: "Well, why do I wear them?" I could find no reason higher than man-pleasing, or better than fear of peculiarity. I saw the necessity of decision. I conscientiously laid them aside. As trophies, for you, of grace's victory, I send herewith—now useless to me—a packet of my old adornings. Do with them what seems to you best. I intend henceforth, to be a simple follower of the Lamb.

Jesus I my cross have taken,  
 All to leave and follow Thee;  
 Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,  
 Thou from hence my all shalt be.  
 Perish every fond ambition,  
 All I've sought, or hoped, or known:  
 Yet how rich is my condition!  
 God and heaven are still my own.

Now before I close, I will confess a woman's weakness. I had often defended these badges of the world by the plea of indifference; I had felt sure that I did not care for them. Ah, Sir, such sayings were words of ignorance. In laying them down I first found how much I had really loved them. It was a much greater denial of self than ever I expected it to be. My sisters, who have not made the experiment, will smile. To encourage them however, to try, I will further say that I have found the burden of the cross to be sweet.

Friends urge upon me that the use of trinkets and the following of the fashions do good to business. An argument I reply as old as Demetrius; and no more triumphant in the lips of traders in vanity than it was in those of the shrine makers of Diana.

I now endeavour to adorn myself only with godliness and good works; and desire, henceforth, that my very dress may tell whose I am.

That God may help you, Sir, to expose this device of Satan before the church, and to drive it right out of it, is the sincere prayer of your sister in Christ,

AGNES MOSS.

Of the Vauxhall special services, Benjamin Gough, Esq., says:—"It was my privilege to entertain Mr.

Collins. Many years have passed, yet the impressions of that visit are unfaded in my mind. Pre-eminently a man of prayer, we found Mr. Collins to be a man of power. A halo of sacred influence seemed to accompany him. His character was fragrant, and all his conversation seasoned. I inquired,—‘Where do you go at Conference?’ The reply,—‘Where God wills,’—was characteristic. We soon perceived the aim of his every word and work to be the accomplishment of Divine purposes. At the service the congregation was large. The hymns were given out with such depth and truth of feeling, and with such hallowed emphasis, that everybody saw them,—sang them,—prayed them. We felt that our song went into the ears of Heaven. The prayer uplifted men, and laid hold on God. Its pleadings were inexpressibly tender; its mighty faith brought down an answer that filled the place with melting power. The subject of the sermon was ‘the baptism of fire.’ While the preacher yet spake, ‘the Holy Ghost fell on them that heard him.’ At the end of the discourse, few left the chapel. Mr. Collins, descending from the pulpit, entered the Communion: there he stood; his broad features strangely beautified, and glowing with the radiance of devotion. He called upon the Leaders, Local Preachers, Prayer Leaders, all of them, to come and surround him. They came. ‘And now,’ said he ‘let us kneel down, and in five minutes of silent prayer consecrate ourselves afresh to God,’ There came upon us—

The speechless awe which dares not move,  
And all the silent heaven of love.

The stillness was breathless and most solemn. Every one felt, ‘How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven.’ When Mr. Collins rose, and with uplifted hands and eyes began to supplicate the outpouring of the Spirit, the scene was overwhelming and sublime. All melted into tears; but soon the tears of penitence brightened into tears of joy. and confessions of sin were followed by hallelujahs of deliverance. This work continued for some hours.”

At Watford, on Sunday, February 15th, it was again

my own happiness to conduct services initial to a series of special ones to be continued by Mr. Collins. In the Lord's work Mr. Collins cared nothing for expense. He paid a good man to call upon every family in the town with an invitation. He also brought up several people of praying power to help in the protracted spiritual exercises of that week. He said, "My difficulty is lodgings; *you must stay with a sweep.*" The sound was worse than the fact. Though soot paid for the house of my host, it was not permitted to defile it. The man was a worthy, respectable person; and had a fund of remembrances full of racy humour. The first Missionary Meeting he attended, after conversion, found him wealthy in the possession of one shilling and twopence. As the collector approached, a question of some difficulty arose. "Copper, silver: which is to go?" Those poor Pagans are in awful case;—but then: a shilling is a good lump;—it is my last; and where the next is to come from I don't see. What a hurry they are in! Why, here's the plate. Mammon has it; on goes the twopence. The closing prayer commenced. The petitions were too big for my gift. I could not respond. I felt mean. So, quietly going up the aisle, I stealthily dropped my shilling on the plate as it lay on the table. Then I could say 'Amen,' as lustily as the best of them. But, botheration, I lost my twopence. So I learned stinginess to be a losing game. When Old Satan has tempted me to it since then, I've often thrown that twopence in his face; and I don't believe he likes it, Sir."

The effort put forth in these Watford services was abundantly repaid. The handful of members were cheered and revived. It was touching to see the whole Sunday School, children, teachers, and officers, bathed in tears together. The power, as the days passed, seemed to accumulate. Four visitors, casually in the town, carried with them from it the joy of a newly-found salvation. One young fellow of the place pleased Mr. Collins much. He said, "Sir, I have given up the glass; smoking shall go too; so here's my pipe. I do not know that I have any other idol; and, by the help of God, I never will have." Another case was peculiar. J. S., of R——, had long been the subject of gracious

strivings, but had resisted them, and carefully avoided all things which he supposed likely to strengthen them. Mr. Collins had been his special dread. At sight of him on the road, the youth had often turned over into a way-side field, to avoid the meeting. With hidden remorse he *had* braved it out;—but only just. Some one told him, “After Watford, they are coming here.” He thought within himself, “Whatever shall I do? I am sure I cannot stand it; I shall break down and make a fool of myself before all my companions.” Haunted by this fear, the young man determined to anticipate matters by going over, fairly yielding himself up, and, if the Lord would, getting converted at Watford. He came. His tears, and cries, and agitation were great; but Jesus met the trembler, and sent him home to his godly father with a song in his mouth. The reality of religious experience often finds confirmation in the fresh phrases used by new converts; unborrowed and self-minted, they yet always turn out to be exactly true to the old ideas. Take two instances afforded by the band-meeting which closed the labours of this happy week. They came from the extremes of youth and age. A little girl, with ecstasy in her beaming eyes, exclaimed, “O, I do *like* Jesus!” “Why?” “Because He *likes* me.” An old woman, who, until those days of grace, for a lifetime had neglected worship, rose up to tell how she had been “renewed in the spirit of her mind.” “I feel,” said she, “*just as if I was somebody else.*”

At the further request of Mr. Collins, my Richmond superiors kindly permitted me the honour of commencing, on Sunday, February 22nd, the proposed special services at Rickmansworth. My excellent kinsman much loved to bring me into the yoke of revival work. It was his desire to pledge me to labour for the conversion of men, that led him to put me thus at the front time after time.

The fidelity that passes none without a word for Jesus soon generates ingenuity for its introduction that precisians will be apt to think eccentric. Mr. Collins's life was thickly strewn with such things. He did them, but did not, except in very intimate circles, tell of them. The specimen I append is only preserved in a sprightly letter



to his little daughter. On Monday, when walking to Rickmansworth, to take charge of the meetings for the week, he came up with an angler on the bank of a stream. "Any success to-day?" "Fair." "I had a good *take* yesterday, myself." "Roach?" "No; souls." "La! *Soles*? Can't catch soles about here." "O, yes, I can. I catch nothing else. The Lord has made me a fisher of men. My bait, and hook, and line, and net, are all for never-dying souls. I catch, not to kill, but to save; and nothing would please me better than to catch you."

At Rickmansworth Mr. Collins stayed at the house of Mr. H. The son, Henry, was a backslider. He would not go to the meetings; and slipped off to bed to avoid family prayer. Mr. Collins called in at his room, knelt by his bedside, and prayed for him. Next morning, at half-past five, there he knelt again. This, each night and each morning, he continued until Friday, when the pent-up, long-resisted feeling could be restrained no longer. The youth arose, went to the prayer-meeting, and, with tears, submitted his heart to Christ.

From March 22nd to March 29th inclusive, a second series of special services was held at St. Alban's. There were meetings for prayer at five, twelve, and half-past six each day; with preaching at seven. Mr. Collins did most of the preaching himself. Some were converted; all were quickened.

On Monday, March 30th, at the Quarterly Meeting, all went cheerily. The exchequer was adequately supplied; the membership sixty in advance, with one hundred and fifty on trial. Efforts for chapel relief were resolved upon.

Tidings having reached Mr. Collins of the departure of his warm, true friend, E. Austen, of Brede, he immediately wrote to the widow:—"You have now become specially the ward of heaven. The Lord Jesus did not visit Martha and Mary in the affliction of their brother, as they had expected; but in His own time and manner He did come; and, when He came, did what was for Himself most glorious; and, for them, exceeding abundantly above their thought. It is a great thing for

Providence so to order the suffering of our friends as to secure by them the edification of the Church. Your dear husband, through his later years, with great heartiness and childlike simplicity, witnessed a good confession; and now, sustained by grace, by a triumphant end he has stimulated the desires and confirmed the faith of many."

Of the same, to the Rev. J. Harris, he wrote:—"My poor, true friend, Edmund Austen the elder, has taken flight. The manner of his departure was a triumph. His dying testimony has greatly excited his neighbours. I tried to reach in time to drop a few loving tears upon his ashes; but could not. The funeral was over; but to such as could be collected I gave an address. Death is at work." Pascall, Hickman, and Hudson, among my own fellow-labourers, are gone. I must be alive for God and souls. For Hudson, my late amiable and affectionate colleague, it was, no longer since than last Tuesday, my mournful duty to preach at Coventry a funeral sermon. The chapel was crowded. It was solace to find how well the work God did by us together there abides. Croakers said, when I was gone all would sink. Blessed be the Lord, there is in that Circuit, this year, not merely retention, but increase."

Of the first term of toil at St. Alban's, with its fruit, a letter by an eye-witness, the Rev. G. Buckley, gives a good summary. "It was my good lot," he says, "to be appointed by the Conference of 1845 as the fellow-labourer in St. Alban's with Mr. Collins. The holiness his sermons set forth his heart experienced. Sanctification, the frequent theme of his discourse, was by him fully, constantly, joyously realized. Such preaching, so practically sustained, had incomparable force. He did not pass off the doctrine of purity as a sort of ecclesiastical coin, but daily exhibited it as a life. The impression his sterling excellence made upon me I can never forget. A greater enemy to the kingdom of darkness Satan never had. Instant in season and out of season, he preached the Gospel out of the pulpit as much as he did in it. Ordinary means could not content him. The cry of his soul was, 'Too much for Thee I cannot do.' Special efforts were going on, here and there, in the Circuit, all

through the year. 'Showers of blessing' came down; and the work of the Lord revived on every hand. We had in the year an increase of one hundred and forty-three, with sixty upon trial."

Mr. Collins attended the Conference of 1846, at Bristol. He lodged, as usual with him, at his own charge. His journey was so hindered that it had got far on in the night when he arrived. Lest the family might be in anxiety waiting his coming, he thought it better to go down in the omnibus and reconnoitre: intending, if he found all dark, quietly to return to an inn. The conductor, however, settled matters in his own fashion, by giving a ring at the bell vigorous enough to have proved an alarum for Rip Van Winkle, or the celebrated seven sleepers. Mr. Collins writes:—"My host, a neat little man, was soon at the door; and I was soon in my chamber."

Of the public prayer-meeting of the next morning, the record is:—"I felt the mighty power of God. Mr. Waddy, Dr. Newton, Robert Young, Dr. Hannah, and Dr. Beaumont prayed. Dr. Beaumont's plea for mercy with the Holy Trinity bore with it my whole heart. Again, at the Ordination Communion, Christ was so revealed to me, as offered for me and for the world, that my soul was dissolved in love."

To each of the newly ordained Mr. Collins presented a copy of the Rev. Thomas Harris's life of William Bramwell.

A letter to me, dated August 3rd, says:—"Our President, Mr. Atherton, in the chair, does his part very well. He has great nerve: puts men down who talk *seesaw* without mercy, and pushes on business expeditiously. I did not think that in the pulpit he accomplished as much as I have known Presidents do. His text was:—'In the last day, that great day of the feast,' &c. It was finished, and terse, but altogether in the minute way;—'A river is this; and a river is that; and a river is the other.' Thus he got shut up in words and phrases, instead of dwelling upon, and getting us into, the gushing fulness."

Mr. Collins goes on to narrate how he extemporized a service in a shabby part, called Phippin Street; he

says :—" The people behaved admirably. I wept, and they wept. About four I would have closed, but as they seemed hungry for the Word, and murmured, ' Go on, go on,' I continued a while longer. The affectionate clinging of the poor people round me reminded me of some of Mr. Wesley's old Bristol experiences."

In a letter, dated August 7th, Mr. Collins informs his father :—" Your old friend, J. W. Cloake, in whose house my soul first tasted the joy of salvation, departed to heaven this morning. He has been plenteous in benedictions and good words ; ' full of love and holy life. He was taken ill on Sunday, and now he is at home."

In deliberate assemblies during discussion, *pro* and *con* are alike legitimate. Rule by majorities supposes the existence of minorities. Every man who has brain and conscience in working order, has been in a minority some time. If a calamity, it is one which only men of the make of Byends' celebrated friend, Mr. Facing-both-ways, can possibly keep out of. No intellect can be so attuned as always to chord with the conclusions of a convention.

But when the Tellers' count goes against the convictions of a loyal man, what must he do ? Jump round in his views with the vote ? Since the decease of the " Vicar of Bray," no extant people, except the editors of the " Times," can do that.

† A recent leading article, in that versatile print, criticizing the speech of a well-known M.P., who had said, " Almighty Providence will take care that what is necessary be done," remarks, "*Such speculations are out of our range of vision.*" In that sentence the great, strong, purblind Titan of the press unwarily blurts out its own weakness. With all its cleverness there is much beyond its " range of vision." Of the earth, earthy, it beholds not the stars. Though clear-sighted, near-sighted, it cannot see into the empyrean.

It is the slave of the English money men ; bound, like one of the spell-fettered genii of Arabian tales, at the talismanic touch of a threepenny bit to appear, morning by morning, bearing a load of words, alas ! too often cunningly devised to set forth its masters' selfishness shapely : not but that it can, upon occasion, speak godly,

and be charitable,—when to do so is respectable. Setting itself to utter the dominant opinion of each day,—versatility is both its profession and its power. “The fashion of this world passeth away;” and “The Times” is just *the passing world in print*. Blame “The Times” for changing? You might as well blame the moon for the same fault: it would soon be behind “the times” if it did not. Let us allot what praise we may; its designation is honest; it calls chicory, *chicory*; its label—rather shabby in the esteem of men who live for eternity—is yet true; for, to suit “the times,” not to uphold principles, is its chosen vocation.

The thing which, while it now tried Mr. Collins's feelings, gave also occasion for his Methodist loyalty, was the action thought necessary in the case of the American, Caughey. As was very natural, Mr. Collins's sympathies were with that prominent and powerful revivalist. He never concealed the fact that the decision arrived at was not according to his mind. He felt it so painfully, that months after he said;—“I do not like to advert to the subject.”

It may be profitable to learn the attitude towards authorities which this holy man's mind assumed under this pressure.

One,—being himself greatly irritated,—knowing Mr. Collins's love of the successful revivalist and his work, wrote, expecting sympathy with a vehement and wholesale denunciation of the Conference, but was surprised and calmed by receiving from him a statement that, while he regretted the conclusion to which his brethren had come, yet he felt sure of their integrity; that, while he sorrowed that divided feeling should have existed, he recognised moderation in the course the majority had decided to adopt. Nor would he leave his correspondent to suppose that they had proceeded in the matter without reason. In the fairest manner possible he sent him a well-digested sum of the arguments by which their conclusions were reached; dealing with each point *seriatim*:—

“‘*Why did Conference interfere?*’ It is responsible for the carrying out of the discipline committed to us. Two District Meetings made appeal upon the point.

Conference must then either consider the case, or shirk its functions.

“*But, should the measures of our discipline be applied to a visitor?*” No courteous visitor would wish the modes of a family to be disturbed for him. Besides, a visit protracted through years becomes a residence.

“*Well, what evil hath he done?*”

“1. It was alleged that he often made professions that the alarming things he uttered were Divine warnings for persons whom, by direct inspiration, he knew to be present. In answer to the defence, that he only threw things into that form when—being an acute observer of mankind—he was morally sure that the crowd around him must furnish instances, the reply was:—He would not degrade himself by acknowledging such a device; but, if he would, how would it mend the case? His words convey the impression that he is inspired; his friends urge that he is calculating. What defence is there in such a plea? One said of this supposed inspiration:—“If it be a claim, I disbelieve it; if it be a trick, I despise it; in either case I oppose it.

“2. It was argued by Mr. Vevers that every man in that Conference was responsible;—was regularly inquired after as to orthodoxy, order, and purity of life;—that this was necessary;—that we hold each other strictly to it;—and that it was alike perilous and unreasonable that a stranger should be upheld, for years together, in a position more independent and unchecked than we should dream of permitting to the most tried and trusted of all our brotherhood.

“3. To the plea, that, by subjection to the several Superintendents, he was—though indirectly—amenable to discipline, Mr. Naylor replied that practically a man with such a host of partizans at his back becomes too strong for the rule of a solitary pastor; nor have facts shown his deference to the Superintendent's wishes to be very special: I—W N.—wrote, informing him that I desired him not to come into my Circuit. My right to do so was of course indisputable. He neither acknowledged my right, nor quietly submitted to my decision, but sent me an uncourteous letter, threatening exposure in hostile prints.

"After long conversation, full of conflicting opinion, Dr. Bunting said:—'The Connexion is undeniably becoming divided in feeling; the judgments even of District Meetings are diverse; this Conference itself is not at one. No man—however gifted—can do so much good as schism among ourselves will do harm. I therefore move that the Bishops of the Troy Conference be written to, and requested to recall Mr. Caughey.' This, being seconded by Mr. Scott, was carried.

"Concerning this decision,—though I gave against it my vote,—I dare not for conscience-sake speak of it in terms of opprobrious condemnation. Conference—when, in its judgment, reason to do so appears—removes us all: we concur in its right to do so: why then is this one man to account it a hardship that his removal is requested?

"*'But God specially called Mr. Caughey.'* Be it so. But did He not also specially call you and me? Should not our spirits, nevertheless, be subject to the prophets?—to our own control?—and, in godly order, to the brethren?

"*'I tell you, the whole thing is mean spite and envy. Leading Ministers secretly repine at being eclipsed by his marvellous success.'* Avaunt, Satan! I will yield, no, not for a moment,—to such a devilish suggestion. When a man, or a body of men, have done an act which lay, if they choose to do it, fully within their own legitimate sphere, I am free to regret their choice; but if I, to whom the secrets of hearts are not open, set myself imputing ill motives for the conduct of those men, whether they sinned or not in what they did, assuredly I shall in my censure of them.

"The question shaped itself thus:—Is it consistent with the constitution and discipline of our body for a Minister to remain occupying the best pulpits of our Connexion, from year to year, without attending our District Meetings;—answering our usual testing questions;—or being amenable to our Conference?

"Had the Conference condemned Mr. Caughey's efforts for the salvation of souls, they would have arrayed themselves against God; but on the other hand, had they, when it was challenged, justified his anomalous position, they would have been untrue to their trust.

"My own wish was, that the brethren had seen it right to end the anomaly by accepting the suggestion of S. D. Waddy, that the Conference should adopt him ; take the rule of him ; and, henceforth, appoint both the time and the place of his labours. Would that Caughey had sought this himself !

"I, loving the man, regret that others do not look upon him as I do. But, since they do not, what ?—Must I wish them to be gagged, or silenced ?—Where then is my regard for liberty ? Am I to assume that only they who see as I do, love the Lord's work,—love souls,—love revivals,—love Methodism ?—Where then is my humility ? Because the majority decide what does not please me, should I impute ill motives to them ?—Where then is my charity ? Am I to allow my mind to brood over the disliked result, taking no note of any marks of moderation in the method ?—Where then is my candour ? Am I, so soon as my private will is thwarted, to turn rebel ?—Where then is my submission ?—Where my loyalty ? How, if such conduct were common, could any church hold together ?"

This is an exemplary specimen of the way in which, while Mr. Collins was manfully true to his own convictions, he was also beautifully true to his brethren.

Later on, when the excitement of his correspondent had subsided, he wrote :—"Poor Caughey has left our shores at last. I did not mean my former letter to cause you to love less either the man or his work. I saw that hurtful feelings were finding place within you. It became, therefore, my duty not to exasperate them by my opinions, but to calm them by setting forth, with all the strength I could, the reasons which weighed with men, wiser than either of us, at the Conference. That end being answered, and your bitterness abated, I may now—without hurting you—let my heart speak. How much I have felt cannot be told. As I had always rejoiced in the success of the man, so have I mourned the clouds that came over his path. Nor have I ceased to pray that all his difficulties may work for his good."

After the Conference, Mr. Collins went up to London to the Meeting of the Evangelical Alliance, at Freemason's Hall. Distinguished Christians of many names



were there. He says :—" It was a noble sight to see so many great and good men gathered for so great and good a purpose. The conduct of affairs was admirable. All foreseen perils were approached with prayer. This, without checking earnestness, subdued it into sweetness. I observed, that when any topic was introduced, which, in an ordinary assembly, would have called forth strong feeling and loud tones, it seemed invariably to be entered upon with more quietness of manner, meekness of spirit, and self-control than common. Thus, matters of difficulty were encountered with patient application, exciting themes dwelt on with calmness, and perplexities overcome by waiting upon God. Wesleyans found themselves well at home in the Alliance. As Churchmen and Dissenters mutually approached, our hearts welcomed them upon ground which our favourite motto, ' Friends of all, and enemies of none,' had, from the beginning, marked as our own. The Divine power was eminently felt. I came away much edified and refreshed."

From Conference until Christmas Mr. Collins continued his usual course, marked by unsparing toil, diversified by incident, chequered with difficulties, cheered by conversions.

An election strife divided his people and vexed his soul. A shying horse, with little warning, rudely deposited him upon a roadside heap of flirts ; from which he rose, " sore, but sound." He writes :—" December 9th.—I was never more fully occupied than now with the duties of my ministry. I have been holding special services in Hemel-Hempstead and Redbourn. In Christmas week I intend doing the same at Bovingdon. That place had been laid upon my heart. Some time ago the chapel would have been sold away from Methodism if I had not found for it £80 upon my own responsibility. This is almost the first money I ever borrowed in my life ; nor would I have done it now but for Christ's sake."

The Journal of December 23rd, 1846, gives a beautiful and unique record of closet work at that poor Bovingdon.

I lodged in a large house, formerly the mansion of Lord Montague. I had, to myself, a noble room ; and much enjoyed, within

it, a day of devotion. The great blessing I received induces me to pen down some communings which my soul had with God at that time. The following was the order of my prayer:—

"I adore Thee, O Lord God, for thy Word, in which Thou hast revealed Thyself. What I read of Thee in that Word I most firmly believe.

"Guided by Thy Word, I believe that Thou art: that Thou art a Spirit, incomprehensible, everlasting, infinite, and unchangeable; that Thou art true, and righteous, and holy, and wise, and mighty; that Thou art love; that Thou art blessed.

"I believe that Thou art true; that Thou art incomprehensible, eternal, infinite, immutable truth.

"I believe that Thou art righteous; that Thou art righteousness, incomprehensible, eternal, infinite, immutable righteousness.

"I believe that Thou art holy; incomprehensibly, eternally, infinitely, immutably holy.

"I believe that Thou art wise; incomprehensibly, eternally, infinitely, immutably wise.

"I believe that Thou art mighty; that Thy might is incomprehensible, eternal, infinite, immutable.

"I believe that Thou art love; that Thy incomprehensible, everlasting, infinite, and unchangeable truth, righteousness, purity, wisdom, and power, are deep-founded in love; that Thy Deity of love upbears all Thy perfections; penetrates, pervades, governs, shines through, and is the substance of them all.

"I believe that Thou art blessed in Thy love;—incomprehensibly blessed;—eternally, infinitely, unchangeably blessed.

"Thus do I believe of Thee, O Jehovah the Father! only Fountain of Being, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I adore Thy paternity, Thy most perfect and ever-blessed Fatherliness. I adore Thee as, by the incomprehensible law of Thy nature, by Thine everlasting, infinite, unchangeable act, Thou dost give Thyself forth in the person of Thy Son.

"And thus do I believe of Thee, O Jehovah Jesus! who, by this incomprehensible, everlasting, infinite, unchanging generation, art the Son of the Father. I adore Thee in Thy filial state,—Thy filial Name, Thy filial right. Thou art of Thy Father; Life, of His life; Truth, of His truth; Holy, of Him that is holy; Wise, of 'the only Wise;' Almighty, of the Almighty; Love, of His love; Bliss, of His bliss. Thou art Thy Father's image, His Heir, His Glory.

"And thus do I believe of Thee, O Jehovah the Spirit! Thou one Spirit, of the Father, and of the Son, ever proceeding. Thou art incomprehensible, everlasting, infinite, and unchangeable. Thou dwellest in the Father and in the Son; and the Father and the Son dwell in Thee.

"Thus, O Three-One Jehovah, do I believe in Thee! Thou Triune Life, Truth, Holiness, Wisdom, Power, Love, and Blessedness.

"Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one only Lord, I adore Thee. In so far as Thou art revealed to me, I adore Thee. In all Thy work of Creation, Government, Redemption, and endless Salvation, I adore Thee.

"I adore Thy truth in its substance and realness.

"I adore Thy righteousness in that it cannot bend or be broken.

"I adore Thy holiness in that it cannot be approached by anything that becomes not Thy majesty.

"I adore Thy wisdom in its depths.

"I adore Thy power in all its acts and capabilities.

"I adore Thy love in all its forms, and Thy blessedness in all its degrees. Thou, O Father, lovest to give forth living forms; and to protect, sustain, feed, fill, comfort, and delight in, all that live of Thee.

"Thou, O Saviour, by inheritance hast all Thy Father's perfections; all His work is Thine; done of Him, by Thee, and for Thee; and Thou lovest to show Thyself, and through Thyself Thy Father, unto all minds.

"Thou, O Spirit, lovest that all the Father's work should be done, and all the Saviour's work known through Thee. Through Thee, the Father impressed His image upon man at the creation; through Thee the Son offered Himself for man in redemption. Thou, Third in order of the Three, giving Thyself to man, art his loving Sanctifier.

"Ineffable Jehovah, Unity in Trinity, O Author, Redeemer, Renewer of my being, to Thee will I now confess my sins and sinfulness.

"Apart from Thee—as I am in myself—I am all sin. If Thou wert to withdraw Thine own out of me, all, both of nature and life, would be alike vile. In me—except as Thou hast put it there—is no good thing. Show me self as—*in itself*—in the light of truth it is. Keep me from boasting as my own, such things as are in me only by Thy grace. Keep in me, inheritor of a fallen nature, memory of what—weltering in ruin—I was when first Thy mercy found me: rebellious, malignant, filthy, and proud. Show me how, since then, I have been quick to joys of sense, but slow and unready to know, obey, and enjoy Thee. I humbly confess that through all my days there has been no thought, word, or act, wholly mine, but has been evil: so evil that Thy holiness must detest its vileness, and Thy righteousness condemn its guilt. With Thy hatred of these my ill-deeds I agree. I abhor them with all my heart. Thy sentence I justify.

"But, O Thou loving, glorious God, while Thou hatest my sin, Thou hast loved and pitied me, poor sinner, and graciously provided for my return unto Thee. To this, Thy love, I shall be eternally indebted. I now come in Thy way, at Thy call, to Thee. Thy mercy embraces me. Thy Majesty covers me. I hide in Thee. Thou art all in all.

"I thank Thee for all that Thou hast done for me and given to me; in my birth; my parents; my Christian friends; in the ministry of Thy word; in my conviction of sin; in my pardon, adoption, renewal, and preservation hitherto; and in the blessing of Thy perfect love. I thank Thee for my call to the ministry; for my continuance through these years; for the answers to prayer which have been given me; and for the souls by Thy grace won to Jesus through my preaching. I thank Thee for my wife and my children, my son, who is with Thee, and my two daughters, who are both on the way unto

Thee. I thank Thee for worldly substance, with which to glorify Thee. *Thou hast supplied my wants, that Thou mightest have all my thoughts.*

“And now I renew my dedication unto Thee. I am Thine, and must be Thine altogether, and for ever.

“Help me in constancy of prayer; in writing down the thoughts Thou givest me; in the guidance of my Circuit; in faithfulness of speech; and in the ceaseless seeking of souls for Thy sake.

“Now, O Lord, hear my prayer for conversions this night. I am come to this place, at Thy word, to seek souls; these souls are Thine; I seek them for Thee. To win them for Thee is my object; is it not Thine? Is it not mine only as I am Thy servant, and as I am in sympathy with Thee?

“‘Father of the spirits of all flesh,’ the men to whom I shall speak are ‘Thine offspring;’—seduced away;—made prodigals;—brought under Thy just displeasure, by Satan. But Thy First-born, Thy Loved One, has redeemed them. To Him hast Thou not promised the neck of His foes? O Lord, fulfil. O Lord, overthrow Satan in Bovingdon this day: overthrow him through this Circuit: overthrow him speedily in all the earth; and reign Thou in all hearts alone. Amen.”

The remaining privacy of this day was occupied in devout reading of the Word, and in the composing of hymns of adoration. Of the work of that kind I subjoin a specimen,—an acrostic.

#### I AM THAT I AM.

Incomprehensible, eternal One,  
All being springs, and is, in Thee alone;  
Mind, matter, space, duration, are Thy own.

Thou changest not, but art to endless days,  
High, holy, wise, and blest beyond all praise.  
All worlds in height, or depth, and all that be,  
Throng the wide universe to honour Thee.

Invisible, but seen in Thy own Word  
As Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one Lord.  
My soul adores! Be Thou by all adored.

The high thoughts and holy joy induced by such communings as we have here recorded, may be gathered from the following remark:—“God hath wonderfully opened His heart unto me. Oceans of delight are there. Many things are amiss in the earth; but, hallelujah! all in God is right. While looking there, the mass of evil in the universe, huge as it is, seems but as the dot of a pen by the side of a planet, when com-

pared with the measureless abysses of purity and good which exist in Him. The Lord is,—and the Lord reigneth : let the earth be glad.”

On February 23rd, 1847, Mr. Collins sent to me a letter of condolence, upon occasion of the death of my mother. He says :—“ She was a tender-hearted, cheerful, active Christian. I loved her, as an aunt ; you, as a mother ; but the Lord has loved her as His own. He who loved her best has called her. Let us embrace His will. With Him do live the spirits of all the faithful dead. Strengthen yourself, and your dear sisters, in Him, who is the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the living. Let me know the day when you deposit the precious dust to rest, as the Saviour did, in hope, and I will be with you.” With the day of sorrow our kinsman came. His kindness, and his holy words, gave a sweetness never to be forgotten to those hours of mourning.

Lack of space compels the omission of many details of evangelistic outgoings, jottings of railway conversations, notes of special services, and records of closet pleadings.

One singular case we will advert to. Matilda Harris, a young woman well known at Harrow, and of unblameable reputation, had an illness ; fits shook her frame daily, and paralysis, apparently beyond all remedy, a long time held her. As the invalid was very patient, gentle, winning, and devout, her chamber was much resorted to by godly people. At the end of about the seventh year of her affliction, she fell into a state of trance. The beholders were expecting her dissolution, when, lo, she awoke and astonished them by a statement that she had seen a heavenly vision, in which recovery had been promised to her, and its time and manner, which she proceeded to declare, made known. As the recovery happened accordingly, the facts attracted great attention. Some of the people of Watford and Rickmansworth invited this young person over ; she came and told among them her strange story. Passing no judgment, Mr. Collins simply says :—“ While I was agonizing in prayer on the other side of the Circuit, God, by this unusual means, was converting and quickening here. All glory to His name. How Thou wilt, Lord ; only work.”

About this time Irish famine was thrilling all British hearts with pity. Every mail brought doleful messages.

Captain Caffin, R.N., sent word :—"Exaggeration is impossible. Famine, with all its horrors, stalks through the land, and fever follows in its train. The people you meet are mere skeletons; their tale of woe is stamped upon their face."

A Clergyman, writing to Dr. M'Neile, said :—"A bright or peaceful moment has long been unknown to me or mine. A continuous, unbroken scene of misery surrounds us. The mirth of the land is gone. No laugh is ever heard. No smile is ever seen. All is deep-seated gloom and despondency. The haggard eye, the sunken cheek, the ghastly hue of almost every passer-by, tells but too mournfully the dire prevalence of the distress."

The Coroner of Mayo affirmed : "I have seen a young man stagger with weakness, and fall dead upon the road. I have seen an infant die upon its mother's dry and empty breast. I have seen a babe trying to suck nurture from the cold bosom of its dead mother. I have seen three—of a family of ten—lie dead at once; the stronger remnant having subsisted for days upon nothing but a few watercresses."

These are but a few specimens from the black record of that crushing desolation. History has few sadder pages. This terrible calamity greatly affected Mr. Collins. It touched his heart, opened his purse, and moved his prayers. He published a discourse upon the occasion, which he designated, "the Man of Prayer: the better Patriot." The text was, 1 Kings xviii. 42. "So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel." He told his sister :—"I hope to aid some in understanding God's voice. I want to send the saints to Carmel." The sermon is a vigorous call to repentance for national favouring of Popery. In it he says :—"The plagues of ancient Israel are upon us: where are the prophets? Ministers must, like Elijah, be so filled with the Spirit, and so above the fear of man, that they shall walk as in eternity, and be entirely given up to prayers and tears, and labours for souls; then, with hearts full of God, and sermons

full of heart, their trumpet will give a certain sound, and they will, through God, awaken the nation."

Of course, Mr. Collins knew—and held in as small esteem as it is worth—the puny wit which makes epigrams about the folly of connecting the feeling of Popery with the failing of potatoes. He knew the arguments—and despised them—of those who rather than lose a place would pension Antichrist. Convenient flexibility was not his characteristic. He had no sympathy with osier politicians, benders with the wind, the world's applauded Pliables; in whose vocabulary *God* and *Truth*, *Providence*, and *For Ever*, get printed small; for whom one human word, EXPEDIENCE, has supplanted all God's laws. Honest convictions—unlike policy—will not swerve. No doubt, on questions of right, faith stiffens a man. Talleyrand's "No prejudices," in English unadorned, most likely, would be called, "No principles." Such facile, supple men, however, have but fading fame. They are but men of their time, not men for all time. Their souls' eyes have but a half-inch focus; their boasted, practical sense is but a glowworm light, irradiating what it can touch, but leaving the deep infinity of surrounding space in midnight. Clever, in their own days, at *wriggling through*, their memory—married to nothing eternal—perishes.

The negotiations were now in progress which issued in the acceptance by Wesleyan schools of Government educational grants. On this question Mr. Collins stood upon very characteristic, but uncommon, ground. In a letter he says:—

I have lately been much afraid of the probability of our Connexion getting trammelled by its reception of State aid, and its admission of State supervision, in the matter of education. *Not that I should at all object to a truly Christian State helping*: but can our Government now claim to have that character?

The training of our statesmen is perilous: while finishing their education by foreign travel, they learn to admire Continental ways, they come to look upon Protestant feeling as bigotry; crown all by paying their respects to "His Holiness;" and then come home to annihilate, if they can, the good old English abhorrence of Popery. Should such people be permitted to mould this nation's mind?

The attitude of Government towards evangelical religion has been but too clearly manifested in each part of the Queen's realm: in

England, by the Socinian Chapel Bill; in Scotland, by its treatment of the good men of the Kirk; in Ireland, by its endowment of Maynooth.

A Government that could so act can in no spiritual things be trusted. While it continues to do so, or holds it right to do so, it is utterly unfit to have any voice concerning the education of the Church's children. Such rulers I will pray for, but not take pay from.

Shall we make covenants with promoters of Popery? or, for gain, enter into coalition with worldly great ones in our Master's work? "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" Money is, in this age, the devil's strong bait: shall we, willingly, subject the Church to its corrupting power? I fear lest the issue of this be that we shall begin to "have men's persons in admiration because of advantage."

As Mr. Collins's feeling on this matter was so strong, he manfully expressed it thus in his printed sermon:—

While king and country adhered to idolatry, only one kind of correspondence with them was open to Elijah, namely, reproof. He did reprove; and the enraged king outlawed him, and negotiated with kings around to take his life; but the witness for God was unmoved, and—noble example of fidelity to all ages—held to his testimony still.

Suppose, now, Ahab had tried another way; had attempted to conciliate him by a grant of money for religious purposes, or for schools of the prophets; why, every Hebrew child could have predicted that Elijah would spurn the idolater's gold.

Let Protestant Ministers and Churches be as faithful to-day. Our Romanizing Government, fresh from endowing a college for the training of idol priests, now turns to evangelical Churches with offers of aid in educational work.

Let all free Churches demonstrate to this Government, which favours Popery, that it has no more power to draw them round its defiled treasury, to stand for doles side by side with infidels, and take grants turn about with priests of Rome, than Ahab would have had to win Elijah to share the dainties of his table with prophets of Baal.

Our motto must be, "No peace with Rome;" and no pay from allies of Rome.

Our nation, by reason of the wrong action of these directors of the State, can no longer be called Protestant. It is essential to fidelity that we refuse aid and praise offered by such unfaithful men. The battle we fight is the Lord's: He alone can give us the victory. We must, therefore, that we may please Him, our great Leader, keep ourselves pure, and advance only according to His word, even though, by His will, it should be along the old paths of labour, suffering, and sacrifice.

Mr. Collins failed to make many perceive that the analogy of Ahab and his priests of Baal went on all fours with the current case. They admired the boldness,



fidelity, and self-denying spirit of his Protestantism, but denied the truth of the parallel and the cogency of the logic. It was urged that the State's having done wrong in endowing a bad thing furnished no reason why it should not do right in aiding a good one. A reply in itself so ready and terse—specially when pressed home with weight from the Mint—was sure to be popular.

Having freely spoken out the burden of his heart, his conscience was clear; his duty was done; the good man was at rest. It is, however, due to the directors of our Connexional educational policy to say, that experience of its working led Mr. Collins, though still inclined to think the time of its first acceptance inopportune, to acknowledge that it had been so wisely guarded as to be unattended by the mischiefs he had feared. The judgment recorded in his journal some years later is:—"My fear was that our Christian dignity would be compromised. God protected us, and confounded the plans of the Parliamentary trucklers to the Pope. Just as they were legalizing the long forbidden embassies of Rome, lo, the men of that city drove the Pontiff from his throne. The inspectors I have met in our schools have always been courteous, and in regard of our special affairs unintrusive. From the whole case, I have learned that the rule, '*We are not to do evil that good may come,*' has another side, which is, that *we are not to refuse to do good lest evil may come.*"

The man who at the demand of conscience—mistaken or otherwise, we need not inquire—was thus outspoken, necessarily lacked all sympathy with the methods of the men in masks who at that juncture were insidiously labouring to set, in the Methodist Connexion, brother against brother. His diary says:—

"July 21st, 1847.—The post has brought me 'Fly Sheets' again. They come from the Cave of Envy, not the closet. I discern in them plenty of personal enmity, but little vehement yearning for the good of the cause. The hand of Everett is in it, I have no doubt. It is a bitter yeast. The ferment of revival, how much better! Godly labour, followed by gracious success, will be Methodism's best safeguard in these disturbed times. 'Salvation is appointed for walls and bulwarks.' O that

all the Lord's Ministers were 'flames of fire !' If every one yearly added his list of names to the roll of the saved, then 'upon all that glory the Lord would create a defence.' "

To one who asked, "Did you sign the Declaration ?" he answered, "I did, I signed the former one also in Dr. Warren's time ; and, should similar occasion arise, I would sign again. If an anonymous document derogatory of me were sent to all my brethren, I should both be sure that it would be read, and, also that, if believed, it would seriously damage me in their esteem. I could not ask them what they thought of me ; but if, led by brotherly affection, they chose to inform me that by no such anonymous communications would they permit their regard for me to be lessened, that kind act of theirs would greatly relieve me. As I would that men should do to me, I did to them. I signed, however, quite as much in the interest of righteousness and equity as of kindness. Suppose that, at a future day, I should have a charge to prefer against those brethren, now thus assailed, should I not do it with all the less hesitancy, and all the more power, because it was known that I had ever been a hater of all hole-and-corner, underhand, anonymous operations ; and that I would only deal with them fairly, openly, honourably, and where their defence could be heard ? "

"August 4th.—We have just had a disquieting farce of an election. A good man, and a good Protestant, has been rejected. Our old Member voted for Maynooth ; the town has just sent a Romanist to keep him company. The success was achieved by the infatuations of cup and gold. Our people are displeased with each other's votes. Estrangements have come about which it will take years to amend. The abominable bribery, folly, excitement, and strife of the last week have left us in a flat and deplorable state. I see no indication of a more Protestant Parliament. The loud words of anti-Maynooth meetings come back in but feeble echoes from the hustings. The state of the Churches and of the nation has, of late, taken such hold of my feelings as to make me really unwell. This one thing I can see, the Churches are not yet holy enough to be trusted with

much power. The influence we have is not used faithfully; perhaps more, if permitted us, would be utterly ruinous to our simplicity, faith, and heavenliness.

"Friday, September 17th.—I have this day waited upon God for aid in this, my third year's appointment. We have, in the past two years, had addition to numbers and improvements in other things, but not up to my prayers or expectations. The prospect ahead is not cheering. Great mountains, deadness, selfishness, timidity, and pride, are in the way. I am tried exceedingly by my own people. I need wisdom as well as zeal, lest I damage what is good in strongly assailing what is evil.

"Instead of laying plans, I resolve, for a season, to wait, giving myself quietly, but entirely, unto prayer; and, as I have, in former times, derived great benefit from an ever-breathing act of faith for 'all the fulness of God,' I resolve, by grace, to persevere therein."

The following exordium of a discourse, delivered in St. Alban's about this time, is of biographic value:—

"During the past two years I have endeavoured to commend my adorable Saviour unto you by the charms of His name, the attractions of His person, and the preciousness of His salvation. Thus dealt with, few of you have cared to notice Him, and of the few who have, at various times, professed to be smitten with the love of Him, several turned back.

"This is my last year; it will soon be gone; with it ends my opportunity of pleading His cause in this place. As the time shortens, I feel more and more anxious for your salvation.

"I try new ground, therefore, this day. Having in vain shown you the blessedness of His mercy, I will now endeavour to set before you the terrors of His judgment-seat. My love for you; my duty to declare the whole counsel of God; and my determination to deliver my own soul, all require this of me.

"Whether I tell you or not; whether you apprehend such a thing or not; 'we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.' In that day there will be terror in the passing elements of nature; terror, in the apparition of angels, fiends, and risen dead; terror in the advent of the Lord; terror, in the purpose of His

coming ; terror, in guilty hearts ; and, above all, terror in the sinner's final doom. 'These terrors we will consider, and then, 'knowing the terrors of the Lord, persuade men.' "

As appointed by Conference, the Ministers had, after the Financial District Meeting, a special day for intercession and spiritual conversation. Mr. Collins says :—

" Wednesday, September 22nd.—We met in the Morning Chapel at City Road. The President, the Rev. Samuel Jackson, called upon us to deal honestly with ourselves, as in the presence of God, the Judge of all. Let Him but see that we are true of heart and sincerely concerned for His cause, and, as of old, he will help us. W. W. Stamp, Ingle, Squance, Lomas, Beaumont, and Rattenbury, engaged in prayer ; the Liverpool Minutes were read, and afterwards addresses given. Ex-President Atherton deprecated the prevalence of boastfulness, and feared that our pride had grieved the Lord. Mr. Reece, after bearing witness, with old Methodist simplicity, of the continual joy experienced in his own soul, urged brethren to faithful dealing with such hearers as wrong themselves and the Church by stopping short of membership. He deplored the lack of reverence manifestly growing in this age. On more than one occasion young people, without the courtesy of offering a reason, without regard for his concern for their welfare, his senior years, or his pastoral office, had thought it enough curtly to reply, ' I differ in opinion, Sir.' He would have us take high ground upon the subject ; teach Church membership as a duty ; a thing ruled and decided ; a thing to be laid before seekers of salvation, in the Lord's name, not for opinion, but for submission. Thomas Jackson looked to former times. There were years of decrease even in Mr. Wesley's days. They lead to heartsearching and to humiliation, and then were followed by seasons of refreshing ; he trusted that so it would be now. It was encouraging to know that our doctrines and our aims continued just what they had ever been ; and God, who had blessed them before, would bless them again. John Scott thought that too often preaching was directed only to the illumination of the understanding, without wrestling with the conscience,

or determinately seeking the salvation of the soul. Dr Bunting spoke many cheering words of trust and hope; and, adverting to the gracious influence during the prayers of the day, said that the Lord would be entreated. Much refreshed by this meeting, I went to my chamber, and waited upon God. I looked to Him for my colleagues, my Local Preachers, Leaders, and members. I believe His Fatherly heart accepted my prayers and tears.

“ November 1st.—I have been much affected by the death of a young man at Hemel Hempstead. He had been perverted by infidels. The sophistries which had sapped his confidence in Christ could furnish him no comfort in affliction. He was proud, hard, and unhappy. Proffered visits he declined: still, though unwelcome, I went. Persistence won upon him. At my last call, after prayer, he pressed my hand, and, as I urged him to look to Christ, he replied, ‘I wish I could.’ I hoped he was yielding. Alas! before I could be there again he had gone. What a clinging curse is unbelief! I cannot learn that he ever did look to Christ. I do not limit the mercy of God, but the cloud upon that grave makes me sad.”

“ November 28th.—I went to Berkhamstead, where, that I might hold services there, I had procured lodgings for a week. I visited each day from house to house. Intense cold thinned the congregations, yet good was done. William Mileman whom I am employing in the Circuit as a Missionary, came to me on Thursday; we retired together to the chapel, and were blessed while I prayed for an anointing to come upon him for his new work.”

Charity carrying a purse is often hardly put to it to make the contents spin out. But Providence often marvellously helps men of simple aim. Mr. Collins writes:—“ God has shown kindness to me in temporal things lately. Having enlarged Redburn chapel without the Trustees, given £50 to Bovingdon, £10 to a brother in need, and helped in other matters, I had become inconveniently short of cash; when my gracious Master, who alone knew my case, moved a gentleman to give me £40, which set me free at once. How wonderful the care of my Father God!”

In a letter sent to me January 4th, 1848, Mr. Collins

writes :—" I was, to appearance, more useful in saving souls when I was younger, knew less, and had more limited means than I now have. This diminution of success has tried me ; but this also I have cast upon God, and I wait for His appearing. I trust, if the Lord will, that my next appointment may set me among a more sympathizing people. The people here will not—no they will not—stir towards the land of perfect love. Trade is in a miserable condition. The poor are distressed for bread, and the wealthier are not thoroughly on the Lord's side. The modern system of being members without meeting in class ; of being on the Plan without preaching ; and of expecting deference for a do-nothing sort of patronage, is trying hard to grow here. I hate it—have set my face against it—and have laid hands upon it. We have just dropped the name of one such from the Plan ; it has stirred his ire ; would rather that it brought him to repentance.

"Our Connexion wants a wide and effectual work ; but, like the Assyrian men of might, we cannot find our hands. Controversies prevail. A blight is on us. It is an hour of the power of darkness. Satan is unwontedly busy. We see small ingatherings, sad apostacies, and divided hearts. There will, I fear, be a falling away, a great falling away, of half-hearted, superficial, inconsiderate professors.

"The guides of the realm, with those who compose it, are, hastily as may be, denuding themselves of all those peculiar marks of a specially Christian people which our fathers gloried in. If the nation be weary of the Lord's livery, the Church should be all the more careful to have it on. Above all, Ministers should put on Christ ; first in the closet, then in the pulpit. Members should put on Christ ; first in heart, then in life. So shall Christ come through His Church unto the world, discomfit Antichrist, and set up His kingdom.

"In these days the devil harasses sincere Ministers and seduces lukewarm ones. Poor D. F. writes me that he is in much hesitation about his call. Devotion to soul-saving is the remedy. A doubt on such a point never crosses my mind.

"My determination is to put on Christ ; and my advice

to you, dear Samuel, lies in those three words:—"Put on Christ."

Of Mr. Collins's ride to the District Meeting, in May, 1848, a valuable notice remains:—"I asked myself, How may I best improve these three hours upon the coach top? It darted through my mind, with vivid light, as a beam from the Lord, that a man can do no better thing than believe the love of God to himself and to his species. I saw—as I never saw before—how all stimulus to holy work comes out of that. I therefore at once gave myself up to a believing meditation of the truth which, with this unusual demonstration, the Spirit had borne home upon my heart. As I did so, the *meaning of the cross* marvelously shone out. My faith strengthened. I took such hold of God's love to me and to man as I had never done before. The journey seemed done too soon. I got down from that coach-top with an indelible lesson and a soul on fire."

The following entry written in Mrs. Gough's album during that District Meeting shows how the great idea had become fixed:—"God wills that I should believe His love to me and to my species; and God's will is man's heaven." A letter of a subsequent date sent to me returns to this theme:—"Since I saw you, I have found a fountain of happiness in God. He has revealed Himself to me in the face of Jesus Christ. He has taught me that firmly and always to believe God's great love to me and to all men, is itself the highest form of obedience to Him, and also that it issues fruitfully in every other form of obedience."

Sunday, May 21st.—Mr. Collins preached at Tunbridge Wells. He writes:—"Powerfully and sweetly did my blessed *One* visit me in the early morning. The perfume of His presence made fragrant every service of the day.

"Friday, June 30th.—In these evil times Christians need more closet work. The dovelike Spirit retires from strife to nestle in the hearts of sons of peace. This day my sacred Covenant Friend has visited me, and led me afresh into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. He encourages me to closer communion. My prayer is, Lord, glorify Thy Name, Thy Son's Name, Thy Spirit's Name, in a great revival.

“Sunday, July 2nd.—I stepped into the house next door to the cottage where I dined. I found the woman to be a backslider, and the man an anxious inquirer. We fell to prayer. The answer came soon and remarkably; both were saved there and then.”

Tuesday, July 4th, at a meeting in his Circuit, Mr. Collins was treated in a manner which he felt to be alike uncourteous and ungenerous. He writes:—“It was well that I entered the room happy and strong. Power was given to me to demean myself meekly. When the trial ended, my soul sought and found tranquility in an hour of meditation and prayer at home.”

For next year's labour, Mr. Collins had overtures from Camborne, Downham, Durham, Gateshead, Tenterden, and Taunton: but in preference to them all he accepted an invitation from Bristol North. The Stationing Committee, not without reason, thought that three such men of flame as Joseph Wood, John M'Lean, and Thomas Collins could not be given all to one Circuit. The representative of Durham upon this demur put in his claim, which was acceded to. Mr. Collins, however, wrote that he had travelled there before, and that on the whole he would prefer an entirely new field of labour. Camborne next asked, and had him. Mr. Collins's father, in a characteristic letter, asks:—“Son, where have you got to now? Your station must be west, for it is in the Cornwall District; but I have searched my Geography for it in vain, and looked through the list of English towns without being able to find of it as much as its name.” My dear uncle was fond of antiquities. I dare say his Geography was venerable. And as Camborne only set up a market in 1802, its absence from his time-worn list is easily accounted for.

The changes, as each draught of stations came, naturally caused some anxiety to Mrs. Collins. Mr. Collins, being from home preaching, wrote to her words of encouraging faith:—“Dear Emkin, my supreme desire is to know and do the will of God. *As a Christian*, I know His will: it is that I should ‘rejoice evermore; pray without ceasing; and in everything give thanks.’ *As a Minister*, I wait his will: Providence will show it soon. He who holds the stars in His hand will direct my course.”



The Bristol Stewards ill-pleased with the issue, sent Mr. Collins word, "We pressed for you to the last. It frets us to be thus *done*. Nor does it appear to us that Conference has dealt either honestly with us, or well with you." He, though the sufferer, could appreciate stationing difficulties better than they could. They, naturally concerned only for Bristol, looking only on their own things, could see no reason why three revivalists might not be spared for one Circuit: men charged with the interests of the whole Connexion could not but feel differently. While his correspondents were thus chafed, he in happier mood, wrote in his closet:—"August 15th, 1848.—My Father God, I accept Thee as wholly mine. Take me where Thou wilt. I leave it to Thee, and promise, in regard of my new Circuit, wherever it be, that, with Thy help, I will do in it Thy will."

In the three years now closing it will have been marked how Mr. Collins had increased in resources. His mental stature, strength, and self-reliance were grown. All leading-strings were gone. He walked, a man. A young Methodist Preacher may learn from his example how possible it is to dissent from the wisdom of a particular conclusion, and yet be loyal to the heart's core to Conference authority. He beautifully blended independence with deference and charity.

His view of the high vocation of Methodism had expanded. In a letter to me he remarked:—"While Romish superstition is giving forth its full-grown fruits in Ireland, and godlessness doing the same in France, the world ought to see Christianity matured in England. Wesleyan Methodists have the beam of heaven upon the doctrine of perfect love, and for that gift owe to God and to the world a great service at this time."

Mr. Collins was a great lover of home, yet, as we have seen, instead of hastening to it so soon as his necessary work was done, there was scarcely a village society in the St. Alban's Circuit to which he did not surrender some week of leisure for special services.

The season had been unpropitious, and the ground stony. His great efforts had been far too little sympathised with. He himself records that the whims and worldliness, sins and misfortunes of men, alike con-

curred in these three years to throw difficulties in his path. Yet, despite adverse times and unhelpful people, he left an increase of a hundred souls.

Doubtless some things we have narrated will be called eccentric. The words of Calderon may be applicable here:—

He who far off beholds another dancing,  
Even he who dances best, and all the time  
Hears not the music that he dances to,  
Thinks him a madman; apprehending not  
The law which moves his else eccentric motion;  
So, he that's in himself insensible  
Of love's sweet influence, misjudges him  
Who moves according to love's melody.  
And, knowing not that all these sighs and tears,  
Ejaculations and impatiences,  
Are necessary changes of a measure  
Which the Divine Musician plays, may call  
The lover crazy, which he would not do,  
Did he within his own heart hear the tune  
Play'd by the Great Musician of the world.

The impression made at that time by his holy life and deeds I will put in the words of the Rev. John Eglinton, the colleague of his final St. Alban's year:—

"I never knew one who so invariably manifested intense desire for the glory of God and the welfare of men. Ever ready to avow his reception of promised holiness, he ever sustained the avowal by a consistency as beautiful as it was uniform. His works of charity, though unostentatious, were frequent, bountiful, and to the full of his ability. His faith in God seemed to be unfailing, as his acts of devotion were ever-recurring. His aptness in private conversational teaching was as marked as the unction and power of his public preaching. His rebukes were resistless. I have seen him bring a drunken sinner to tears by a single sentence. I have seen a number of careless young men drop down in humiliation and penitence, melted, one after the other, under the influence of his prayer. I never met with any who could give such freshness to well-known truth, or explain oft-repeated scriptures with such heart-arresting raciness. I shall ever cherish towards his memory reverent admiration and grateful love."

## CHAPTER XI.

### CAMBORNE.

A LETTER from a Camborne colleague, welcoming Mr. Collins, informed him :—"Of the two chapels here one is very spacious and handsome. The Circuit ranks with the very first in the county ; nor are there many in the Connexion more compact. In ticket time you will find fellowship of saints not scarce. The members are so numerous that you will both have to work yourself and take care that we do also, if the visitation is to be accomplished in moderate time. The friends are, for the most part, connected with mining operations. The mines in this neighbourhood are amongst the most productive in Cornwall. Cornish Methodists, with many excellences, join some peculiarities. Preachers labouring in this region, Superintendents above all, must make straight paths for their feet. Uppish men are an abomination here : and, not seldom, get awkward thumps and communications more frank than welcome. This characteristic of the people will, I know, cause you neither fear nor difficulty. I may add, what is more likely to touch your experience, that they are very warm-hearted, and hold such Ministers as win their confidence in extraordinary esteem."

Mr. Collins's first Friday record in Camborne bears date :—

"September 8th, 1848.—At Watford on August 15th, I took God to be wholly mine, covenanting to go where, how, and to whatever, He should choose for me. For my being here I am free of responsibility. It has come to pass contrary to my thought ; without my seeking ; independently of my action. Believing in God, and

standing fast to my agreement with Him, I accept the appointment as His own. Already He has sanctioned it, and cheered me by making four persons happy in the joy of His salvation. O Lord, Thou hast loosed my bonds; Thou has made me ready for all Thy perfect will. Let Thy will be done; done according to the unspeakable greatness of Thy love to me and to my species."

The statistics of the Connexion reported to the Conference of 1848 were not satisfactory. The following "Tract for the Times" came to Mr. Collins from his father; dated September 9th:—"The present slow advance of Methodism becomes a grief to me. Surely our array,—Ministers, Local Preachers, Leaders, Prayer Leaders, Sick Visitors, Tract Distributors, Teachers, ought to accomplish greater things. O for a baptism of the Holy Ghost! Bethesda was troubled before it could cure; and we must be better to do more. When fire infuseth its vehement heat, water seems all alive with motion. So when power from God thrills a church, members and officers are full of holy zeal, penitents move, and the neighbourhood is stirred. This it what we want.

"A great evil is among us. Indolence prevails. An infinite amount of Methodist talent is buried. Scores of thousands who should be labourers stand idle in the market-place; very many because no man appears to hire them.

"Through all our societies let every class be examined, and let every man and woman found in them possessing gifts be encouraged, required, and urged to employ them. No pains pay so well as those taken to call out, instruct and make way for Christian labourers. Canvassers for Sunday schools, visitors for the sick and destitute, might at once in great numbers be enrolled. Many new cottage prayer-meetings and exhortation services should be started. Large classes should be divided; much benefit accrues. The leader of a small class can deal more thoroughly with cases that arise, and keep more careful oversight of members, than the leader of a multitude can do. The multiplication of classes gets more personal influence into exercise.

Each new leader is the centre of a circle within which he, better than any other, can work and win souls. If the flattering word, sometimes said of us, that we are 'all at it and always at it,' could but be made true, an annual increase of one hundred thousand would by no means be impracticable. That good seed the Saviour told of, which 'brings forth some sixty and some a hundredfold,' seems, now-a-days, hard to find in the field."

The same matter was carefully taken up by the Ministers who gathered in the Financial District Meeting at Redruth. They devoted, as directed by the Conference, a whole session, on Wednesday, September 19th, to careful examination into the spiritual condition of the District. Mr. Collins's notes say:—"The Chairman, the Rev. R. Young, directed us to David's prayer, 'Create within me a clean heart, and uphold me with Thy free Spirit.' W P. Burgess set forth some difficulties which competitive rivalry of other denominations, now-a-days throws in our path. Being called upon to speak, I then said, 'This is an eventful hour: more so than we apprehend, perhaps. The eyes of the enemy; the eyes of the people; the eyes of our brethren are upon us. But what most solemnly impresses me is, that the eyes of the Lord behold us. To-day He subjects us to the test. He would know what is in our heart; whether we can endure this shameful decline; whether we can bear that the precious influence long connected with our Church in this land, should gradually melt away; or whether the thought of such an evil will move us from our quiet, set us harder to work, and bring us closer to Himself? If these effects be not produced, some heavier stroke may come upon us.

"Decrease in Methodism is a damage to religion in general; a calamity on our country, and a loss of blessing, in many ways, to mankind. We know that a few years of it would cripple our system, and force upon us an inglorious struggle for mere existence. We must neither magnify nor dwell upon difficulties. The matter lies in small compass; despite the lion in the street, we must either increase or die.

"The history of our fathers is encouraging; when

they were few, and their external aids few; when the opposition made to them was frightful on all sides, they yet made progress. They had power with God, and, through God, power with men. We may have as much power as our fathers had, and more; and we must have as much as they had, and more, if we would achieve the mighty results our times require.

“God and men may righteously expect us, for whom the road is prepared, to move faster than they did who had to make it. Our platform of doctrine is settled; our system of discipline fixed; our schools and places of worship numerous; our working staff a great army. God, who has given us such vantage, cannot but require of us much aggression.

“The old power can be obtained by three things:—experimental consistency with our own teaching of truth; freedom from the manners, maxims, and spirit of the world; and passion for souls. Before Ministers perfect in love, members spiritually minded, and workers agonizing for souls, the kingdom of hell would tremble.’

“The Lord then enabled me to confess before my brethren, to the glory of His grace, my experience of, and constant joy in, His perfect love. I, moreover, told them that, pledged as we, in all our examinations, are to faith in that doctrine, and to earnest seeking of its possession, I did not see how I, or any other Methodist Preacher, could honestly live without it.

“This whole day of brotherly conference was one of heart-searching, of tears, and of spiritual refreshment.”

“Sunday, September 24th.—At Illogan Downs many, during the first prayer, were filled with joy. My spirit was so borne away that at its close I was compelled to pause, that I might recover the calmness and memory necessary for repetition of the Lord’s prayer.

“Monday, September 25th.—Saw Mrs. P. She was very ill, and very contrite. Her witness was sweet.

I am a poor, unworthy wretch; yet even in me Jesus saw something that He was loath that the devil should have. The love is unspeakable which stooped so low for one so vile.’

“Friday, September 29th.—This day I have a satisfaction in God that I cannot describe. I take Him for

my own with all the might I can command of faith and love."

"Monday, October 11th.—I have observed that when 'times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord,' men are sensible of them, enjoy them, and profit by them, in proportion as they are holy. Signs of a mighty work appear in this town. Nobody opposes. I have only to abide with God in the closet, receive Him there, and then go among the people and break the alabaster box; they know the odour, and love it."

Whole pages of the Journal now about are taken up with records of conversions.

"Sunday, October 22nd.—My gracious Father, with my own adorable Saviour, came near this morning; nor let me omit grateful memory of Thy sweet power, O Spirit of grace! 'The Lord is my portion,' saith my soul.

"Sunday, November 19th.—Walking from Forest to Tuckingmill, in the quiet, lonely road between the hills, I lifted my heart to God, and offered myself afresh for His service. O my God! since Thou hast bestowed Thy well-beloved Son upon me, I take Him with my utmost power, and Thee in Him. Thou art mine; even all Thy fulness. Yes, the whole ocean of happiness and good in Thee, though my narrow heart cannot contain it, yet I claim it. It is the reserve out of which will come the ever-growing bliss of my eternal heaven. O, stretch my vessel wider! Let me daily love Thee more. Do Thy will in me; do Thy will by me; above all, do by me Thy will in the salvation of men."

The young here, as in former Circuits, had the kindly solicitude of Mr. Collins. He carefully visited the schools: conducted a Bible class for young men; and met little children weekly at Saturday noontimes.

Though full of work, he still maintained hours of privacy, and kept up reading with diligence. Through his habit of note-making we can track his course and learn, for instance, how the patient zeal portrayed in the life of the Chinese Missionary Morrison delighted him. The writings of Archbishop Usher called forth his admiration of the clear and weighty way in which they treat of redemption and justification; though he pens

a regret that sanctification, the theme of so many of his own meditations, had not won equal place in the great prelate's thoughts.

Mr. Collins's clear, strong witness concerning holiness soon bore fruit. From many proofs we select just one. It came, bearing date, Monday, December 18th, 1848:—"Variously moved by your sermon yesterday morning, drawn, driven, and encouraged, I ventured to exercise faith in the promises of full salvation. Doing so, I have again proved that saying true—'The faith shall bring the power.' I now joyfully testify that 'the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin.'

"Confession strengthens faith; mine needs every help. It has not, for even this brief space, been left unassailed. The enemy already has struck at it. I clearly see that my Lord has both commanded holiness and promised it. 'His promise I believe; His offer I embrace.' To Him, in trust, moment by moment, I commit my soul, that He may work in it the good pleasure of His will. Too weak to fight, I take JEHOVAH as my strength, and find that His right hand does valiantly for me."

"When you go to the throne, pray and give praise, for yours truly, E. V."

On Tuesday, December 26th, Mr. Collins preached in the afternoon at Redruth in behalf of Missions. An incident related in the evening meeting much interested him. The Rev. T Hull stated that, when at Gibraltar, his gift to a refractory soldier, of a tract entitled, "The Roll Call," led to the man's conversion. When at London, in 1842, Mr. Hull was invited to the house of the well-known authoress, Charlotte Elizabeth, at Blackheath. She being perfectly deaf, and he ignorant of the finger alphabet, conversation had to be carried on through her husband. She inquired, "Have you ever known any good done by tracts?" Through the interpreter he told the wayward soldier's case; and was surprised to see how, as the narrative was slowly spelled out, it melted her into tears. The tract was of her own writing; and now, in a day of depression, when fearing that her work was in vain, the kind Father had thus brought to her home cheering tidings from afar.



In the Minutes of the Conference of 1745 the following occurs :—

“ Q. 16.—Do we not discourage dreams and visions too much?—As if we condemned them *toto genere*.

“ A. We do not intend to do this. We neither *discourage nor encourage* them. We learn from Acts ii. 19 to expect something of this kind ‘ in the last days.’ ”

In the spirit of that old Minute, taking facts as I find them, attested by the signature of the party concerned, I give the following narrative, endorsed by M. R. of Camborne :—

“ I dreamed that as I was walking through a beautiful meadow, a gentleman came up, and said, ‘ Go with me.’ ‘ Where?’ I asked. ‘ To hear the Gospel.’ At that reply I followed him to a chapel door; he opened it; I looked within, and then awoke. The scene was so vivid that I could not forbear mentioning it to my husband; after which, as a matter of no moment, I quite dismissed it from my thoughts. The next day, business taking me along the road, I came, before I was aware, to the door of the Wesleyan chapel. It recalled my vision. The door being open, curiosity drew me to step, for the first time in my life, within the walls. Judge my astonishment when I saw that every brick and beam in the place exactly answered to what in the night I had seen; but astonishment changed into unspeakable awe when I observed that you, then praying, both in dress and face, were the very evangelist of my dream. I felt that I had had a message from Heaven. My sense of sin; my conviction that God intended me mercy; and my determination at once to embrace it, were deep and immediate. Since then, thank God! myself and my husband have both received Christ; and are, by His grace, resolved to serve Him all our days.”

At the Quarterly Meeting held at Camborne, Thursday, January 4th, 1849, there were found to be two hundred and eighteen on trial. Mr. Collins writes, “ It was a comfortable meeting, and will diffuse a good savour through the Societies.”

The records of closet work on the first five Sabbaths next ensuing after the Quarterly Meeting, will perhaps

furnish the best waymarks of spiritual progress; and best teach how the success vouchsafed was insured:—

About five o'clock on Lord's day morning, January 7th, 1849. In anticipation of the solemn service of Covenant renewal, I was waiting upon God in believing acts. He mercifully drew near to me, as once—only once before—He did, years ago, on the Rock of Skarfs-kerry. His coming darkened and distanced all earthly things. My soul felt as if within the cloud of Tabor. While it hung around me, I cried, "I know Thee! Yes, I know Thee!" That ineffable glory did not long abide, such specialties of manifestation never do; but in its gentle ascent it left a sweet life, a calm, and a tenderness which cannot be expressed.

A letter to his recent colleague, the Rev. John Eglington, dated three days later, January 10th, further advertising to this unusual manifestation, says:—

So in the light of that revelation did I see my natural evil, the delinquencies of my youth, the roughness of my manner, and the impetuosity of my spirit, that, humbled before God, I have, ever since that hour, felt disposed to ask forgiveness of men.

My heart thus chastened fears that—although I cannot with certainty recal any circumstance of the kind—I may, during our former intercourse, have occasionally urged you unduly, or grieved you unnecessarily.

Yielding to such a feeling as this, some would stigmatize as weak; all I know is, the approach of God awakened it. Therefore, without hesitation, I ask, if ever I improperly caused you pain, forgive me, my brother.

In reply to the kind things it has pleased you to say of my manner of life at St. Alban's, I admit that I intended well, but in many things performance lagged behind intention. The work of mortification, necessary for a Minister who has been in a degree successful, was carried on there. I learned, by experience, the great profit of abasement before God, and, remembering the lesson, can truly say that I rejoice more in the good St. Alban's Circuit did to me, than in any good I did to it.

My change has brought some comforts. Here the work progresses. Here I am rather popular; I have to complain rather of a crowd than of desertion. Here, seemingly, the people think something of me; but as God drew me to Himself in places where men could not know me, now, when many throng around me, my soul cleaves to Him. Learning of Him more, I think of myself less.

I hope, my brother, that ere this you have attained to love God with all your heart: He loves you with all His. Look ever where the Incarnate Love bleeds naked on the cross for man. Learn there how God loves you. In return for *such love* my whole heart is such a poor nothing, that in its entirety I am ashamed of it: how, then, could I come before Him if any of it were held back?

'The register of the next Sabbath is :—.

Sunday, January 14th.—Waiting on God in my room, meditating on Christ as King, the relation between His cross and His throne grew plain to me. It pleased me to see the Father's delight in that "obedience unto death." The idea was ecstatic that for redeeming man, for redeeming me, "God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name." Love sounded in my ears as the keynote of the coronation decree :—"I have set my King upon My holy hill." The vision of the Son, my Saviour, by the Father thus seated on the highest throne, administering universal rule, and robed in ultimate authority, was a source of rapturous thought. How brightly now that sentence shone, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth!" Paternal Deity backing the Mediator's throne, in that light, seemed to me a fact very full of Gospel. Guided by the Lord's own prayer, I besought the Father that this kingdom by Him set up in heaven might soon visibly come unto all the earth, and His will everywhere be so done, that to Jesus, His well beloved, every knee might bow, and every tongue confess.

Sunday, January 21st.—I began at half past four to commune with God. At six I went into the vestry to join a few chosen friends in acts of faith.

Sunday, January 28th.—I was with the Lord at half-past four. I claimed my Father through His Son. After dinner I was more stirred than common, having read how "the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," I took hold of Him as the Giver of my vocation, and dealt with Him for His help.

Sunday, February 4th.—At half past four I began to wait before the Lord. At six I resorted to a select company of believers gathered in the vestry. Our motto for the morning, which we set ourselves to understand, and plead, and claim, was this :—"In all places where I record My name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee."

These meetings of a few chosen friends prepared to pass an hour in exercises of faith, became somewhat frequent ; and, to those who shared in them, were of inestimable advantage.

A letter written by Mr. Collins to his mother we subjoin. It will beautifully set forth both his exemplary filial affection, and also the success which now rewarded his labour for the Lord.

CAMBORNE, *February 28th, 1849.*

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I enclose two pounds for you ; observe, *for you* ; it is to be given to nobody, but spent, all of it, honestly in comforts for your-

self. I am sorry to hear of your poor health. The distance is great, yet, if you do not get better, I will come and see you.

I have that perfect confidence in the Lord, and love in Him, that will not wish to let me keep you back from His joyous presence even one moment longer than He pleases; though the thought is very sharp—not of losing, I shall not lose, but—of losing sight of such a mother.

I call to mind the soothing tones of your voice, as you sang to me, when I was little; and all your oft-expressed desires that I might be obedient, and wise, and good. Your mind then, as now, was always towards the Lord.

It is near eighteen years since, by the providence of God, we were separated. I have myself become the head of a family; I have walked heartbroken by the grave of a child; I have had upon me many cares of the Church; but, through all, have never forgotten you, mother. I say this, though I never was, and am not now, anything like the picture which is upon my mind of what a good son ought to be. But, for my failures in this, as in other things, I betake me to the blood of Jesus.

You will be pleased to hear that the Lord helps me in my work. We have not yet the overwhelming power of a great revival, yet conversions are continually taking place.

The day before yesterday I called on Nanny Paul, and the Lord saved her as she lay ill upon her bed. On Sunday, I told Henry Vivian, a sick man, the way of life, and God blessed him with it there and then. In the afternoon of the same day, Alice Mayne informed me that she found peace the Sunday before, through hearing from me of Christ as exhibited in the lifted serpent. Yesterday week I took tea—where do you think?—at an inn! The landlady has given herself to God; and, that day had invited a seeking penitent, Miss Treglown, to meet me. While we talked and prayed, the Lord set her soul at liberty. The day before that, Monday the 19th, at Mr. Eddy's, his brother William received forgiveness. On the Saturday before that, Simon Hocking, the younger, was brought happily to God. So we go on, mother. I trust that you will think that you did not nurture me, and pray for me, altogether in vain.

I receive the Atonement; and open my heart to receive with that all God is pleased to give. Thus welcomed, He comes to me, lives in me, works through me. The help that is done on the earth, He doeth it. Mother, what a mystery of love is this, God accepting man into fellowship!

My wife joins in love with your affectionate Son,

THOMAS COLLINS.

About this time Mr. Collins was rejoiced, and his people greatly moved, in a meeting at Tuckingmill, by hearing a narrative of the glorious doings of the Lord then in progress in the Truro Circuit. Whole families had been saved in a day; scores set free in single meet-

ings ; and, on one occasion, when those not being members, who were willing to give up sin and give themselves at once to Christ and His people, were invited to follow the Minister into another room, amid the sobs of the witnessing congregation, one hundred and ten arose and went after him.

The Journal says:—

“Tuesday, March 27th.—We held our Quarterly Meeting. A message came to one of the Circuit Stewards, as he sat counting cash, that, in a class-room nigh at hand, his wife had just received the peace of God. We sang praise ; and felt it no hardship for business to suffer such an interruption. As funds were up, finances were soon disposed of ; and the whole time after tea was given up to godly conversation and prayer. Dr. Smith and others told with much feeling of the conversion of members of their families. The Rev. W. Arthur, here as one of the Missionary Society’s deputation, cheered us with an account of a recent wonderful work of God among the youths of Wesley College. Most there had felt its influence. Of the masters one alone was left. He was packing his boxes to go home for the vacation, when, lo, a circle of happy lads gathered round him, and prayed for him with such power that his melted heart submitted to the Lord on the spot ; and he thus became the crowning trophy of this season of grace.

“Since Conference, in this Circuit three hundred and fifty-eight additional join in our fellowship ; one hundred and fifteen full members, and two hundred and forty-three on trial.”

Under the weight of Cornish deputation work Mr. Barrett’s strength so broke down that he was obliged to return home, leaving some of it undone. In the emergency the friends of Hayle obtained Mr. Collins as the supply of their pulpit on the afternoon of Tuesday, April 10th. The text chosen was Deuteronomy vi. 4, 5 : “Hear, O Israel : The Lord our God is one Lord : and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” Dr. Smith writes—“That sermon dealt with the first truth and with the first duty, in a most original, profound, and

powerful manner. It was a masterly discourse." The Rev. W. Arthur, who was also present, said, sixteen years after, in the Conference, "I never heard Mr. Collins preach but once; but that once brought a blessing I shall never forget."

The Diary of Thursday, April 12th, 1849, says:—"This day I enter upon my fortieth year. How important does the improvement of time now look to me! I feel more anxious than ever to be of service to the souls of men. I cannot do much; may all I do be good! O for a great revival! My spirit groans for God this day. I shall soon be called away from earth to Him; and I beg for more of Him before I go."

An agreement was largely entered into by the Camborne Leaders for daily noontime intercession; answering works of special grace soon followed. I read of conversions taking place in the depth of the Tincroft Mine; of penitents sobbing along the road; of people saved finding their cottage rooms too narrow for their joy, and rushing out of doors to shout their praises in the free air; of new classes formed, and growing in one short month to such numbers as made division a necessity.

Saturday, April 21st, found Mr. Collins in the service of the Mission cause at St. Austell. The large family surrounding him where he lodged awoke his interest. He says, "On Lord's day morning I prayed earnestly for all of them before I came down stairs." The services of the day were fruitful. On Monday morning a short walk brought him to a beautiful copse, the quiet of which invited him to an hour of his beloved communing. The exercises of his sylvan closet being ended, he wandered on into the fields. Some Methodist people of the adjoining farmstead knew him, and, following, requested his services for the comfort of a sick young man. He went, and had a glorious reward. Full of power, gathered in his recent talk with God, the influence that accompanied him seemed irresistible. The farmer opened his heart to perfect love; his wife entered into peace; and the afflicted son-in-law received comfort. This good work held him so long that at his return he found the visitors gathered, and dinner half concluded.

This part of Mr. Collins's ministry appears to have been specially rich in accompanying grace and issuing fruit. The instances of conversion registered are very numerous ; and of services now held such descriptive phrases as these are common :—" Melting influence,"—" precious season,"—" much drawn out,"—" Divine presence powerfully manifested,"—" Blessing filled the place."

On Tuesday, May 15th, the District Meeting began. Thursday was largely occupied in hearing glad tidings of the gracious work God was then doing in various parts of Cornwall. The Revs. R. Young and J. H. James specially refreshed the hearts of the brethren by their narratives. At Penzance, their solicitude had been awakened by the large number of young people of Christian parentage, of regular habits, and of amiable manners, who yet were careless about religion, lovers of pleasure, and undeniably unconverted. Intercessions, sermons, and private pastoral attentions were all directed to their benefit. Results came ; a great work soon began, and speedily spread, until it had reached and blessed most in the congregation between fourteen and five-and-twenty. Of one Circuit Steward's children, five were saved in a week ; in the household of his colleague, three. Nights of wrestling with God occurred in many homes, followed by a happy day-dawn shining upon families completely saved. The March lovefeast is of joyful memory. It affected the pastors to tears to hear young people, many of them from a class which, much too seldom, in such meetings, contributes its quota of edification, one after another, for three hours, bear testimonies of God's saving grace, singularly clear, simple, and impressive. The young ladies of Penzance, with no other prompting than their own sense of duty, adopted quiet, godly attire, and discarded superfluous ornament. Of the artificial flowers which in the days of folly had served vanity, an elegant work-basket was constructed, and sold for the Missions. At the anniversary just concluded before the District Meeting, a thank-offering of £10, was laid upon the Mission altar by these young converts, thus recently turned to the Lord.

At Mousehole, the work was among another class; there, hardy sons of the ocean abound, whose burly frames, weather-beaten features, and sailor jackets, give a novel and interesting look to the congregations in the eyes of a Minister from inland stations. The place is rich in Methodist traditions, circling round such names as those of John and Michael Wright, Trewavas, and Carvosso. The first indication of good began with the year. In its earliest moments, at the close of the Watch-night, one whose spirit had long been in fetters, found liberty. On the evening of the New Year's day so auspiciously commenced, heavenly fire fell in a meeting of Sabbath-school teachers; and many of them began to cry after God. The work rapidly spread, and numbers were saved. The zeal of the new converts was remarkable. The idea of concealing what God had done for them, entered none of their heads. Whole days were spent in going from house to house, telling all, without fear or exception, of the love of Jesus. Thus, in a short time, the work spread over the whole town.

At Newlyn, "showers of blessing" came down. Sinners were brought to God by scores. The climax came on Easter Monday: formerly a day of riot, it was this year a day of holy power. In its services a hundred persons, chiefly men, were added to the Lord. All ages and all ranks were subdued by the power of the cross. A Minister, at the renewal of tickets, asked the new converts to come around the table. To his surprise, seven old men, the youngest sixty-five, the oldest eighty, responded to his call. It was unspeakably affecting to see the tears chase each other down the furrows of their hard and storm-worn faces. Many a prayer-meeting out at sea was held in tiny barks by such brave mariners. Oft when they had shot their nets, the voice of prayer and praise swelled out in the calm evening, and made the deep vocal, as it rose from boat after boat of the fisher fleet.

Mr. Collins came home jubilant over this great work of God, which had thus made gay butterflies of fashion, plain; intemperate fishermen, sober; and weak churches, strong.

On May 25th, to give poor children of the school



pleasure, and at the same time to take them away from the perils of a noisy, revelling fair, a trip to the shore was devised. Ever affectionate to children, Mr. Collins not only accompanied them, but dashed off for the occasion a holiday ode. Its end was answered in the happiness it gave hundreds of young hearts. I append it rather as an instance of his kindliness than as a specimen of his verse. The cheeriness with which its easy flowing lines rang out that day, sufficiently proved their suitability to utter, yet guide, the exuberance of child gladness.

Hearts are lighter than a feather,  
As we walk in rank and row :  
First we sing and pray together,  
Then away to Hayle we go.  
Happy teachers !  
Who reward their children so.

We rejoice, and we have reason,  
Though we don't attend the fair ;  
Better spend the happy season  
Breathing in the fresh sea air.  
Happy children !  
What a number will be there !

We shall see the rolling ocean,  
We shall breathe the fresh sea air,  
We shall go with rapid motion,  
In a twinkling shall be there.  
Happy morning !  
When we breathe the fresh sea air.'

See, the country comes to meet us,  
And the swallows can't outfly ;  
Houses, trees, and hedges, greet us,  
Running by, and running by.  
Happy Camborne !  
Where the railway is so nigh.

Where there is no Gospel preaching,  
There the children have no friend ;  
They have neither treat nor teaching,  
Till the blessed book we send.  
Happy Britain !  
Where the children find a friend.

Tuesday, May 29th, Mr. Collins preached a funeral

sermon for Polly Tonkin. Her age was ninety. For threescore years and ten she had walked in the light of the Lord. Bunyan, in that touching description of Christian at the cross, tells how, as there he looked, and wondered, and wept, three shining ones came unto him. Not less certainly did Father, Son, and Holy Ghost at that same cross draw near to poor Methodist Polly Tonkin: nor were salutation, robe, or seal lacking. The text, as she said, *given to her* in the day of her adoption, was Psalm ciii. 12: "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." Through seventy years that Word remained the gem in her memory. It never lost its power to awake her praise. It acted like a spell, even amid the decays of failing nature. Mr. Collins says, "I never quoted it without finding that I had the key of her heart."

"Friday, June 1st.—I have perfect complaisance in God, and a strong desire to glorify Him in my brief day. I want, and am believing for, more constant penetration of, and by, His truth.

"Thursday, June 7th.—I am trying to raise a Ragged School. I long to be useful. I have been asking my Master to help me.

"Friday, June 29th. — Our second Camborne Fair began. To guard our young people we held an evening meeting. The Rev. John Gostick showed 'the insufficiency of the world for the soul;' Dr. Smith set forth 'the claims of Christ;' Mr. W. Smith argued 'the benefit of religion in relation to this life;' the Rev. Robert Lyon urged 'immediate decision for God;' I closed with 'counsels for young disciples.'"

A letter, dated July 9th, says:—"On Sunday, July 1st, I preached at nine o'clock in the open air, in front of the shows. The same thing was done at five in the afternoon. As two of the travelling theatres stayed after the fair, the campaign thus opened was continued through the week. Outdoor service, amid noise and excitement, proved to be so exhausting, that on the morning of Thursday, the 5th, I was too unwell to rise. A visitor from Somersetshire, stricken by the Word the evening before, came up to my house to ask the way to Christ.

I had him into my bedroom ; made him read, and called upon him to believe, 1 John v. 9. While he prayed at the foot of my bed, his prayer was turned into praise. Thus in my weakness God gave me spoil. One of the play-acting companies, not liking our competition, cleared off. My bilious attack prevented me from bombarding the other ; however, my colleagues carried the siege on well, and knew of sinners saved. By Saturday night I was sufficiently recovered to return to my post. And this evening, Monday, 9th, all being well, I shall be at it again. I do not know that I ever was more comfortable than here. The Circuit improves. The women dress simply, the men are zealous, and the converts are numerous."

Before the Conference, to which Mr. Collins was to go as his sister's guest, she then living at Droylesden, near Manchester, he wrote to her :—" Dudley, Coventry, and Leamington have asked for services on my way, but *I need rest*, and have declined them all ; yet, if you will get my mother over from Leeds, *for her sake* I will give you a few sermons."

At the close of that eventful Conference a letter came to me, full of reminiscences, not without interest now. He says :—

" This has been one of the largest and most important Conferences ever held. It struck me that the prevailing agitation is telling upon the health of many brethren. The younger men were balder and more wrinkled than they should have been ; the elder, observably shorter. Dr. Newton, for instance ; his head has gone down an inch or two since I last saw him. Dr. Bunting looks well, and has worked hard ; his deliverances have been lucid and helpful as ever ; nor has he ever been too excited. Loveliness more and more blends with his true greatness.

" Dr. Beaumont took care early, though seemingly in an incidental way, to purge himself from connexion with the ' Fly Sheets.' His stigma of G. Osborn as ' the accuser of the brethren ' was wrong. He did once or twice intimate, in some general way, apology for words uttered unadvisedly in the excitement of such a time. A manly, Christian, definite withdrawal of that offensive

misapplication of Scripture phrase ought, however, to have been made in plain terms.

"G. Osborn could not well avoid beginning that movement which has brought upon him the condemnation of a faction, and the gratitude of the Conference. Three years ago, in the Conference, he proposed changes, deemed by him to be salutary, in the management of our Book Affairs; the 'Fly Sheet' people quoted him in their service. No man who could form an opinion and state it, was safe from such appropriation. This left no way for true men to maintain their independence, except that of disavowing all connexion with the slanderers in masks.

"G. Osborn's addresses in Committee and in Conference were marked by much feeling. His tone was bold, and his epithets strong; but I did not see at the time, nor can I now recall, anything he has need to regret. His energy was what was necessary to the achieving of a great deliverance for his brethren and for the Connexion.

"Daniel Walton conducted himself as well as, in his circumstances, a man could. He said how deeply he regretted the use made, without his consent, of a paper of his composition, in No. 2 of the 'Fly Sheets.' He altogether condemned the 'Fly Sheet' species of writing, and justified his brethren in saying that it ought, and seeking that it should, be ended.

"You may have noticed in certain reports of the reception given by the Conference to the addresses of Dunn and Griffiths, that '*hisses*' are marked. So gross a departure from truth grieves me. Nobody ever heard hisses in Conference. What alone could possibly be so mistaken, was that hushing sound which some brethren made to stay the whisperings of others near them: a thing really intended, not to interrupt, but to secure profoundest silence.

"The Conference performed its work of putting away in a solemn spirit. Many tears were shed. These expulsions will occasion perplexity to many. Such offences as these men had done, though equally wicked, and more widely mischievous, do not scandalize people,

do not prepare them to admit the justice of acts of discipline, as sins of fleshy indulgence do.

“The President, the Rev. Thomas Jackson, looks but little older, and mentally is quite equal to his former self in the Centenary year. He greatly wins my sympathy. He seemed filled with the Spirit. An unction was upon him for his arduous work. His addresses, crowded with solid verities, were gushes from the heart, yet full of wisdom as of warmth. His holy power at the ordination; his grasp of principles; his tact in the management of business; his reliance upon his own resources, without turning here or there for hints; his impartiality in giving every man a hearing; are pleasant to look back upon. The richness of his memory, tenderness of his heart, and clearness of his understanding; his gentleness of authority; his steadiness of purpose, and his fulness of spirituality, manifest in every look, and tone, and act, made my heart rise in gratitude to God that such a man was found among us for the necessities of such a time.”

The first Friday record after Mr. Collins's return, bearing date August 24th, reads:—“I feel my need of God. I want this year to live nearer to Him than ever. I desire wisdom for all His work. That every moment may glorify Him is, and shall be, by His grace, the effort and end of my whole life.”

About this time mighty wonders were wrought by the Holy Ghost. A revival broke out which swayed the people through several Circuits with extraordinary power. There had been much prayer and much general preparedness; but the approach of pestilence brought things to a point. A few fatal cases occurred at Illogan, Redruth, and Camborne. The dread name of cholera seemed to awake the people like the trumpet of doom. Anxiety became deep and general. In many places, such numbers flocked at all hours to the chapels, that their doors could not be closed for days together. The Rev. Robert Bond writes:—“One great momentous concern seemed to pervade the mass of the people. One intense agonizing inquiry was heard in every direction, ‘What must I do to be saved?’ Domestic engagements and worldly business seemed suspended

until the great question of salvation was settled. An awful circumstance occurred in Redruth on Monday, September 3rd. A young man was being borne to burial: a spirited horse ridden by Lady Bassett's groom, scared by some unknown cause, dashed unmanageably among the mourners, leaped over the coffin, and killed the bereaved father dead on the spot. This death in the street, so sudden, so terrible, filled the town with tears. The chapel was resorted to by a multitude; nor could it be closed the livelong night. The day appointed by Connexional authority for special fasting, humiliation, and prayer was memorable. Though market-day at Redruth, yet one thousand people bent their knees at every meeting; while at night not less than two thousand crowded in to hear the Word."

In Mr. Collins's Circuit similar multitudes came; and when he tried to preach, so overpowered was he by the cries of penitents, that the service necessarily developed into a prayer-meeting.

Many interesting revival incidents are preserved. Take the following:—"I called on Mrs. Crowle; my time was short; and, had I allowed it, she would have wasted every precious moment in mere dilating upon her misery, wretchedness, and sin. I insisted that she should stop, turn her mind right round from self, look to Jesus, and tell me what she saw in Him. While I enlarged upon the love of God revealed in His Son, she received the atonement. When I went next time, she was full of joy. The third time I called, her happy soul had fled to heaven."

"At Forest, a butcher, till lately very wicked, cried in agony, 'I am lost! I am lost! I have nothing!' 'Nothing?' I replied, 'why, man, *all the hill of Calvary belongs to you!*' The word struck. The poor fellow's doubt fled like darkness before the morning, and he shouted, 'Glory! Glory!' till the place rang again.

"I went on to Mrs. T., who was supposed to be dying. Her husband sorrowfully said, 'It is hard to part.' During prayer the Lord spoke *peace to her soul and health to her body, all at once.* In an ecstasy she rose from her bed, exclaiming, 'I am well now: sin and suffering are both gone.'"

"Returning home rather late, in the quiet street I heard distressful cries proceeding from a chamber. A moment's listening let me know that it was a sorrowing soul pleading for mercy. I got admission, and found that the man and his wife were alike determined not to sleep until they could rest in Jesus. I joined them in prayer, and salvation came to that house before I left."

"At the December Quarterly Meeting there was an addition of one hundred and seventy-one members, with nine hundred and thirty-five on trial."

"Sunday, December 30th.—At four o'clock I came into my study to commune with the Lord. I was much moved to ask a work of holiness upon the work of conversion which God had so gloriously wrought. In the morning service I felt power, but my pent-up emotions thoroughly broke through in the afternoon, by the bedside of Carvosso's niece, old Mrs. M'Lean. Her daughter offered her some cordial to drink. She replied, 'I cannot, child; I am too weak.' 'Do not say so, mother dear. You will be down among us again yet.' 'Who says so?' 'I do, mother.' 'You! *you are always a-foreboding!*' Poor soul! she so longed for heaven that thought of recovery was an alarm to her." \*

A letter dated January 3rd, 1850, says:—"Dear mother, I wished you with me last Monday. We gathered more than fourscore widows to tea in the school-room. Six of the company had known Mr. Wesley. After tea, I set before them the exemplary widows of Holy Scripture,—the hospitable widow, the devout widow, the distressed widow, the importunate widow, and the magnanimous widow."

To a young Minister Mr. Collins wrote:—"I volunteer nothing respecting Hebrew. My knowledge of it is not sufficiently thorough to warrant me setting up as Professor; and recent revival work has much broken through my habit of daily reading it.

"The three words you mention are exceedingly expressive; variously uttering love. '*Grace*,'—to an undeserving creature; '*Mercy*,'—to an ill-deserving one; '*Peace*,'—sets forth reconciliation, with its resulting 'quietness and assurance for ever.'

"I have just read Simeon's Life, and have adored the

Lord who opened to me, very early, those views of Himself which Simeon is described as rejoicing in when nearing his end. Thoughts of God in His Fatherliness reign in my soul. The Spirit cries in me, 'Abba.' I have of late been enabled in the closet to wait on Him without hurry. He comes very near. He desires my confidence and fullest love. It is a reasonable demand, and shall be complied with.

"Just thoughts of God lie at the foundation both of religion and of happiness. I hope you often resort to the secret place of the Most High: we best deal with rebels while we ourselves keep close to the throne."

Mr. Collins took part in the Penzance Missionary Anniversary. At the Breakfast Meeting held April 2nd, he riveted attention by his quaint recital of a conversation held that morning between himself and King David. The Rev. H. L. Church, one of his auditors, informs me that it was a comment on Psalm xix., most original, beautiful, and impressive. The dialogue form was so managed and maintained as to reveal skill and graphic power of no mean order. While in Penzance, one said, "Sir, did you ever preach in Hastings?" "Yes." "Then you must be the man under whom, sixteen years ago, I and my wife were saved." "Was the text, 'Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life?'" "That I cannot recal." "Did the Minister say, 'You are like a drowning man, swimming round the boat, and round the boat, but never getting in?'" "Yes. I remember that." "Then I am the man. Do you both continue steadfast?" "Yes, Sir, and have done ever since."

April 12th, 1850.—This day I am forty years of age. In the last ten years my experience in things of God has deepened. I habitually receive God in my heart, I continually rest in His paternal character. In sight of all His mercies to me, and knowing the use He has made of me, I bless the day that I was born.

This fair dawn, spent in closet musings, began the unhappy day in which quiet Camborne was afflicted with the presence of the trio of deposed Ministers. Going in the afternoon to preach, Mr. Collins unexpectedly met one of them, Samuel Dunn, walking alone in the field. The narrative of the interview I append:—



Mr. Dunn held out his hand. As a friend of former days I saluted him, but with protest that the act must not be understood as welcoming him upon his present business.

D. "You should not have placed me in circumstances which make such visits necessary."

C. "As the case appears to me, the position you occupy is one of your own making."

D. "What New Testament law have I broken?"

C. "Paul will tell you, 'A bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God. Not self-willed.' Now, so long ago as at Dudley I thought you self-willed."

D. "Dudley! You never opposed me there, why vilify me now?"

C. "I never vilified you then, or now; and then, as now, having respect to authority, you being my Superintendent, I deferred to you and defended you as far as I could. But, without adverting to those bygone matters, recent conduct shows the same character. Your refusal to answer the question Conference put to you,—a question which if put to me should have been answered in a moment,—showed you to be still a self-willed man; which Holy Scripture says you ought not to be."

D. "Well, why were not all non-signers questioned equally?"

C. "A known writer—should he on some occasion choose to omit his name—will, most likely, soon be suspected by touches of his style. Thus, at an earlier date, suspicion in regard to the 'Wesleyan Takings' fell strongly on Mr. Everett. Questions he then refused to answer. Similar reasons, in the opinion alike of friends and foes, implicated him now in the authorship of the 'Fly Sheets.' Again he refused to answer; and I, for one, rejoice that Conference would no longer endure such treatment at his hands."

D. "If the 'Fly Sheets' betrayed Mr. Everett's style, his style is not mine; why was I questioned?"

C. "A chief writer and editor is not inconsistent with the idea of a number of various contributors: and, indeed, the 'Sheets' themselves professed to be thus the joint productions of persons in various parts of the kingdom. The question put to you was not, 'Are you the author?' but, 'Are you any way concerned in the authorship?' To this question you made yourself justly liable by your condemnation of the 'Declaration.'"

D. "Had I submitted to that inquisition, I should have directly contravened Matt. xviii. 15."

C. "That is not proved; but it is indisputable that the 'Fly Sheet' writers contravened Matt. xviii. 15. Yet your conscience had no scruple on that side; it allowed you to screen them. Members of Conference were accused; accused persistently, until it became necessary that the accusations, though unendorsed, should yet be noticed. The writers alleging such matters were challenged to come forward; ought to have done so; as they would not, Conference owed to its servants, if it could, to bring them forward; justice could no otherwise be done. When Conference was doing this, you threw yourself across the path of justice, and it has smitten you."

D. "Did not Mr. Everett call for his accusers as well as Dr. Bunting? Why, then, is one retained and the other expelled?"

C. "Mr. Everett did indeed call for his accusers; but *he omitted to deny the allegations*, which was the first thing Dr. Bunting did."

D. "I will ask you one question; look me in the face and answer me. Did you lift up your hand for my expulsion, or not?"

C. "Certainly I did."

D. "Then come down and meet me before the public."

C. "The world is no proper court of appeal against decisions of the Church."

D. "Choose, then, fifty Wesleyans, and I will choose an equal number."

C. "What good either to you or to me could come from such a course?"

D. "You would have opportunity of setting yourself right; or I, if I got from them a favourable verdict, might find it so much towards my readmission."

C. "I need no setting right; I am under no sentence; and your readmission is hopeless. A Minister after your own mode you may be; but a Minister on the Connexional plan—a Wesleyan Minister—with your insubordinacy, you cannot be. And I, for one, seeing your subsequent conduct, am so far from wishing that you should be that, I tell you, the day Conference lets you in they will let me out."

D. "Well, come and defend yourself and your vote."

C. "Nay, I will go and visit the sick and preach the Gospel."

D. "Can you approve of Thomas Jackson? Can you say that Dr. Bunting is not indolent?"

C. "For the gift of such men to our Connexion for these times I have this day adored God. Face to face with Dr. Bunting you were silent. I will not hear you now, I must go."

D. "You are a despot."

C. "No, not I."

D. "Then you are a slave."

C. "I am—as Paul was—of the Lord Jesus."

The threatened meeting took place; and to thousands in the public streets this saint of God was held up to derision in blatant and inflammatory speeches. I do not care to trace the havoc, blasting, and desolation that followed this sad inauguration of strife. My whole heart detests such scenes. Suffice it to say, that it stopped revival, divided brethren, scattered the fruit of better men's labours, struck seven hundred from the church's muster-roll, and in the end harassed into illness this holy man. Tears of blood were not too much to weep over the huge mischief done that day. May the Lord have mercy on the doers of it!

On the reading of Mr. Collins's obituary in the Con-

ference Dr. James said, "I call to mind a very remarkable scene in his life which I witnessed at a Missionary Meeting in the Camborne Circuit three days after the visit of certain men, never mentioned in this Conference now. So successfully had they blackened his character, because of his loyalty to you, that he, awhile before the favourite, almost the idol, of the neighbourhood, was actually hooted as he passed along the streets. Nineteenths of the people at the meeting, so misled, at a word would have been ready to pull him in pieces. Being called upon to speak, he stepped to the front, and, calmly facing them all, said, 'Mr. Chairman, Christian friends, I am a man who neither fears the frown, nor courts the smile, of any living. I am a man through whose soul the light of the Sun of Righteousness beams all day and all night.' I shall never forget the impression produced on that audience. That testimony was irresistible. I then felt, what I now say, that if ever we had in this ministry a holy man, a man owned of God, that man was Thomas Collins."

Mr. Collins had skill and humour for such times and such meetings, as well as saintly boldness. Accept the following specimen delivered in Truro:—

"We Methodist Ministers have, of late, been much accused; and before this audience I feel that I have some admissions to make. It is said, 1. 'You love power.' So we do. I love power dearly; yet I would not thank you for the power which the Pope has; indeed, just now, he in exile, it is not easy to say what his power is; but I apprehend it to be some eminent degree of 'the power of darkness.' Nor do I covet such power as Her Majesty so graciously wields; no, I grasp, I assure you, after higher things; I would have the very highest possible power; power with God; and, through Him, power with men; power to take them as in a net. I want—my brethren want—this power, and no other, I am persuaded.

"2. 'You are always after money.' True; our Master has committed to us to preach the Gospel all over the world; our people on all sides are solemnly praying for the world's conversion. Is it wrong that we confide in their consistency with their own petitions?—

that we believe in their liberality?—that we believe that it only waits for us to open the way in which to apply it? Here are four hundred men, for the most part with families, and all the necessary expenses of Missionary establishments, to be provided for. Now, some, through covetousness, give so little, and others, through carelessness, so late, that unless we would leave those families to lack, we, for their sake, must be busy here and there after the cash. Does anybody dream that these appeals can be pleasant to us? No; our eye is upon the judgment seat. When our people stand there, their reward will be not according to their knowledge, but according to their work. Should any fail of full reward through our neglect of urging him to activity and charity, from him, and from the Judge, what a look of reproof should we get then! Stirred by fear of this,—often at the cost of much feeling,—we move you to toil and to give, that we, in that day, may be without blame; and that you also may receive of the Lord praise, and honour, and glory, at the last.

“3. ‘You are designing men.’ That is true. I am a designing man. I have in my mind a design now: to begin my Bible again, and read it with more faith, prayer, and thanksgiving than ever. I have a design to draw my family closer to God, and to get my hearers into the same mind. These are my chief designs at present. All others that I have bow down to them and serve them. Could you this moment scan the naked hearts of my brethren, you would, I doubt not, find some such designs in them.

“4. ‘You are clever tacticians. You outwit the people.’ To cleverness and tact I have no pretension. But, I admit that my brethren who manage Connexional affairs really are clever tacticians. Well, should your weighty affairs be committed to asses? The men *are clever*, but holy withal; and use their brains not to circumvent, but to serve you.

“5. ‘You are the Conference party.’ Some time ago there was danger of parties in the Conference. Thank God, that is over now. Statecraft delights to play one party off against another. The Church of Christ must not be ruled so. Party is a worldly word; it has no text

in the Bible, and should have no place in the Church. The church of God is the kingdom of God ; it has one Head, one law, one end.

“ If there ought to be parties in the Conference, there ought to be also in the gatherings of Leaders, Local Preachers, Sunday School Teachers, scholars, and families. What would come of that but universal strife?

“ I like our old word, the Bible word,—‘ *Body*.’ That is it ; we are a body,—‘ one body,’—in which every member does his office. We cannot consent to be made monstrous in the eyes of the world ; Janus-headed, looking opposite ways, and talking with two tongues. We will not be like the Siamese twins, two bodies in one, mutually scowling. We will have but one head, one mouth, one mind. But we will have ten fingers to work, and ten toes to walk ; and each shall mind its own business ; and so there shall be no schism in the body.

“ 6. ‘ You are against Wesleyan Reform.’ Yes, I am. Methodism is the child of Providence ; originated in God’s mind ; modelled by God’s hand. He has watched, and fed, and kept the child. The child is growing and *will grow ; but it keeps its form*. If she has a spot, talk not of reforming, but of washing her. But those who would do that must beware lest they come to the work with a sooty hand. You think her wrinkled ; it is only want of rest of late. Seek for her heavenly cordial. Ask the Lord to ‘ revive ’ her ; but leave her form alone. He made it, and you cannot mend it.

“ 7. ‘ You are Popish Priests.’ Nay, nay ; they burn the Bible ; we urge you to read it.

“ After all, we Ministers are poor things at best. Pray for us more. Would you have better? Well ; those dear boys of yours, who will soon fill our places, train them up to be as self-denying and laborious, as holy and as wise, as you think Methodist Preachers ought to be.”

Early in June Mr. Collins’s health broke down ; so broke down that it compelled him, though only ending his second year, to seek from the Conference change from the air, relief from the anxieties, and rest from the toil of Camborne Circuit.

The impression made in that place by the man and

his work I will set forth in the following extracts from competent witnesses:—

Dr. Smith observes:—"His spirit was ardent and evangelical; his words well chosen and full of force. His sermons exhibited mental strength, originality, and genius, in no ordinary degree. His ministry was accompanied by mighty influence, and issued in the salvation of hundreds."

M. G. Pearce, Esq., writes:—"His piety towered above the stature of common Christians. How mighty he was in prayer! how profound in spiritual insight! how cheerful in temper! how confiding in faith! Times of extreme trial passed over him; yet no bitterness ever tainted his soul. He was firm without acrimony; true, yet charitable. His condescension to the ignorant, compassion for the sick, and liberality to the poor, the last day only can reveal. Fervent love to God moved every pulse of his heart, breathed in all his words, and glowed in all his actions."

The Rev. John Gostick says:—"It was my privilege during the Camborne years to be Mr. Collins's colleague. That association I regard as one of the best blessings of my life; and derive from it many most treasured recollections. Those who knew Mr. Collins, even slightly, must have a vivid impression of his worth; and will never be likely to forget him, or to confound him with another; but to have enjoyed his continued and intimate friendship is to feel an increase of responsibility, and to possess a life-long memory of no common value.

"Mr. Collins was in all respects a man of mark. His intellect was broad and vigorous; and his acquirements were not inconsiderable. His social qualities were of the highest order. Every influence of his nature was generous and noble. Rich, quiet humour lent unspeakable charm to his conversation.

"By Divine grace every attribute he possessed, natural or acquired, went to make him a good Minister of Jesus Christ. Whether regarded as to the extent and influence of his pulpit labours, the amount and quality of his pastoral intercourse, or the general, varied, and constant effect of his life and spirit upon those around him,

he will ever be remembered as a burning and shining light. His influence with all classes was extraordinary. Members and hearers, rich and poor, religious and profane, young and old, alike acknowledged it. His usefulness was immense.

“Of Christian holiness he was a beautiful example, and a constant witness. It was continually urged in his preaching and in his conversation; but still more commended and illustrated in his life. Holiness seemed in him, not an effort, but a result; you were struck with its simplicity as much as with its dignity. He walked with God and with you too. No one can describe the happiness and sanctity that were blended in his spirit; the heavenly sunshine that seemed to come out of him and rest upon his features. In Mr. Collins’s society you ever felt your own deficiencies; but never dreamt that he saw them.

“His prayers—and nowhere more than in our weekly Preachers’ Meetings—were wonderful outpourings of the soul. What thoughts and language came to him, as he adored and magnified the Lord, acknowledged and bewailed sin, exulted in the work and offices of Jesus, or pleaded with beseeching importunity and unwavering faith for the blessings of grace! Those were scenes and seasons of refreshing; and sweet is their memory still, I ought not to omit mention of his faithfulness as a colleague. With fellow-labourers he was ever not only true-hearted but warm-hearted.

“While enthusiastically loyal to Methodism, Methodism did not limit his Christian sympathy. By all means in his power he kept acquaintance and sought intercourse with the ‘whole estate of the Church.’ Neither has our own nor any other section of the Church often lost so devoted, loving, and useful a Minister as we did, when my revered Superintendent and beloved friend, Thomas Collins, went home to God.”

## CHAPTER XII.

### ST. AUSTELL AND HEMEL HEMPSTEAD.

ST. AUSTELL, the station allotted by the Conference, was in that sad time one of the most unquiet and perturbed of the Cornish Circuits. The Chairman of the District laid hands upon Mr. Collins,—not with his will,—hoping that his weight of character might steady the people, and his earnestness of zeal engage them in better work.

How came dissatisfaction to be so widely diffused? Judicious Hooker well says:—

“He that goeth about to persuade a multitude, that they are not so well governed as they ought to be, shall never want attentive and favourable hearers; because they know the manifold defects whereunto every kind of regiment is subject, but the secret lets and difficulties, which in public proceedings are innumerable and inevitable, they have not ordinarily the judgment to consider. And because such as openly reprove supposed disorders are taken for principal friends to the common benefit of all, and for men that carry singular freedom of mind; under this fair and plausible colour whatsoever they utter passeth for good and current. That which wanteth in the weight of their speech, is supplied by the aptness of men’s minds to accept and believe it. Whereas, on the other side, if we maintain things that are established, we have not only to strive with a number of heavy prejudices deeply rooted in the hearts of men, who think that herein we serve the time, and speak in favour of the present state, because we either hold or seek preferment; but also to bear such exceptions as minds, so averted, usually take against that which they are loath shall be poured into them.”

I will, of choice, omit all further record of the strug-



gles of that disastrous season, which many of us painfully remember as having hindered us in our work for God, and bereaved us of our children. Such a time were unworthily passed if it taught nothing. Lessons purchased by heart-pangs should not be forgotten. Truths made apparent at such a cost deserve the pages their record may cover.

The chief opponents of Wesleyan Methodism in my time have been Anglicans without and dissidents within.

By the former it is objected that Methodism is not in accordance with antiquity. What is meant by antiquity? The vagaries of mediævalism? Learn the apostolic mind from Popes, Councils, and Schoolmen! You might as well dip in Mississippi, where it is mingled with the blending of a thousand streams, muddy with the gatherings of a thousand miles, or brackish with the influx of a thousand ocean waves, to learn how it tasted in its earliest fountain. Milton, in his grand and ponderous way, says:—"We do injuriously in thinking to taste better the evangelical manna by seasoning our mouths with the scraps and fragments of an unknown table. Why should we be ever searching among the verminous and polluted rags dropped over-worn from the toiling shoulders of Time, with these deformedly to quilt and overlace the spotless and undecaying robe of truth? Truth is the daughter not of Time, but of Heaven; and only bred up here below in Christian hearts by two grave and holy nurses, the doctrine and discipline of the Gospel."

Two questions arise: What was primitive usage? and what binding force has primitive usage upon us? The difficulty of answering the first question suggests an answer to the second. Had God willed the forms and rules of the first planted churches to have been the immutable ecclesiastical model and changeless law of all times, He would have provided for us a sure record of what those rules and forms were.

The Scriptures, though abounding in principles of church life, have a marked absence of the details of church form. They prescribe no ecclesiastical system, decree no ceremonials, contain no law canonical. Omissions *from inspired books* have a logical value, and

afford basis of argument. The Book teaches all that is necessary to salvation, all that may be required to be believed in as an article of faith; but the Book does not teach systems of polity nor rubrics of ritual; therefore these things are not requisites of faith, or essentials of salvation. They are left among the things of which expedience is the law, and about which freedom of preference may be permitted.

What evidence there is, favours the opinion that, in the main, Apostles, in their ordering of the Church, followed the humanly-invented modes of the synagogue, with such changes as suited the new time, new teaching, and new circumstances.

The idea that the externalism of the Church, in the days of its first planting, was to be its ruling exemplar through all ages, never occurred to the men of the ages immediately subsequent. Its simple forms they altered, and supplemented without scruple. If the Fathers, in these things, were not afraid to diverge from the Apostles, who shall convict us of boldness if we dare affirm ourselves to be under no bond to follow them?

But whether we, in our usages, be primitive or not,—Anglicans may not safely throw stones,—prelates, with baronies and lordships, a service outvying Hebrew rites in pomp and mystery, a Church unfenced by godly discipline, and a creed with latitudinarian lawyers for its final exponents, are certainly not apostolical.

In politics the Divine thing is *authority*, not the name, or shape, it happens to bear. Wine is wine, though you put it in a teacup: the decanter is not essential. Loyalty is a Christian duty in the United States as much as in England. A republic is as much "*Dei Gratia*" as a monarchy. Paul would have written, "*The powers that be* are ordained of God," whether King, Dictator, Triumvirate, or Emperor, had been for the time at the top. Most earthly dominations have blood at their base, but we tease not our consciences with scruples of dark historic inquiry about title. We recognise facts. To whom Providence gives the lease of power, to them we render acknowledgment. Wherever there is a magistracy armed with strength, actually repressing anarchy, smiting evil doers, and

giving peace and security to them that do well, in our eyes "they are God's Ministers, attending continually upon this very thing."

Now as I recognise *de facto* governments, so I recognise *de facto* churches. Wherever there is a body of believing men, who have among them provision for Christian worship, fellowship, the means of grace, and the regular inculcation of Divine truth; who have also recognised power of godly discipline, enforcing the laws of Christ, shutting goats out and keeping sheep in; there is a church.

Gold is gold, and will fetch its price the world over, wherever minted, however called, — ducat, moidore, sovereign;—whatever symbol made to bear of power imperial, mixed, or popular. Intrinsic value makes it pass. So, wherever there are guarantees for the expression, maintenance, and outworking, of the great essential principles of truth, purity, peace, and evangelism, there is a Church precious to Christ, whether its meeting place be beneath the roof of a cathedral, or the rafters of a village chapel. It is current *with Him*, whether the impress be Connexional or Congregational, Presbyterian or Prelatic.

That system is most Divine *which is best*. That system is best which most wisely meets the exigencies of the times; most completely embodies the principle of fellowship, which is love, love of God, love of the brethren, love of the common cause; and most fully answers the ends for which the Church was instituted, viz., to witness for truth, to foster individual piety, and to spread it through the world.

When changes in any existing system are mooted, the question testing their value is this:—Will the proposed alterations make brighter the verities of the creed, raise higher the attainments of the soul, or diffuse more widely the Gospel through the world?

That corner-stone of Protestantism, the right of private judgment, is but the other side of the truth that "every man must give account *of himself* to God." This claim, one of the noblest trophies the struggles of the sixteenth century won, cannot be surrendered without closing the eyes of the soul, foregoing manhood, and

putting ourselves at disadvantage for the audit at the last day. I must judge for myself, seeing that I must *be judged* for myself. I must judge for myself, since I cannot ponder by proxy, and may not appear at the bar of doom by deputy.

Of course, this truth—the right of private judgment—stands not alone: many other considerations come in. Individualism must be limited enough to make societies cohere.

How far is free action to issue from free thought? If to my mind certain regulations appear undesirable, it is admitted that I may seek to change them; but I must do so lawfully, prudently, and charitably. And, before I undertake so weighty a business, it would be wise to study what qualifications befit one who would be a reviser of church rules.

1. *Freedom from all feud and personal animosity.* Such high vocation cometh not to angry spirits. Changes proposed because of quarrel are more likely to inflame the Church than to amend it. “The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.” For one to set on fire the Church that won him to Christ out of mere resentment, is conduct heathenish as that of the Brahmin who, with tearless eyes, puts torch to his living mother’s funeral pyre.

2. *Holiness.* Only the pure truly sympathize with the Lord’s mind, and plans, and purposes. I would rather trust a committee of village blacksmiths and uncultured ploughmen as “Board of Management” for the Royal Academy, than a company of men of unsanctified tempers as ecclesiastical reformers.

3. *Thorough knowledge of the Scriptures.* Sail with a captain ignorant of his chart, sooner than follow a leader “unskilful in the Word.”

4. *Acquaintance with church history.* History lengthens experience. Men unacquainted with it often waste time in experiments which old attempts have proved to be useless.

5. *Knowledge of the times.* How strangely the Ritualists of this day read the dial wrong! They do not know the difference between A.M. and P.M. The clock has struck twelve. It is noon. They think it is midnight.

6. *Practical skill.* Methodism was not born in the brain of a theorist. Like the British Constitution, it is a growth rather than a manufacture. Providence moulded it by the pressure of emergencies, and developed it by the bestowment of success. Some men would improvisatorize you a code any day before breakfast: I should not like to give them their breakfast for their trouble. Systems that leap at once full-grown from the brain, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter, may read well enough on paper, but seldom work.

If these personal qualifications be in me, and, with them all, I still think changes to be necessary, how must they be sought?

1. *Warily.* *Festina lente*, "Make haste slowly," is a good motto here. Changes in church systems are not to be desired lightly, unadvisedly, capriciously. You would think long before you allowed anybody to revise a Homer, touch up a Phidias, or mend a Raphael. To all freakish men, or rash and presumptuous men, you would cry "hands off."

2. *Patiently.* However clearly a change appears unto you likely to prove beneficial, you must not be angry because others cannot see it in your light. Nothing must be forced. Your idea, if wise, and good, and true, will live and leaven: but you must wait. Nothing must be done before the time.

3. *Charitably.* Do not knock out a man's brains to kill a fly on his forehead. To buy a farthing with a sovereign is foolish trade. To win a little change by ruining many souls is woful folly.

4. *With careful self-abnegation.* Self-seeking in the Church, like sin in heaven, shows the blacker for its locality. There are who would rather be printed in Newgate Calendar than forgotten; who would not stick at burning the world, if only sure that another world would talk about it.

5. *Lawfully.* Onward movements should be in line with the ancient grooves. Progress had better be slow than ungovernable. The spirit of insubordination gives little presage of good.

6. *Religiously.* Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory. Let God be all. On no account, *and on no*

*side*, let fraud, or defamation, or wrong be used. Some men have such an itch for evil-speaking, that, like that unmannerly thief, if caught and crucified, they would rail on their crosses, and die reviling.

When unable to convince others of the value of the changes I seek in ecclesiastical system, what course must I then pursue?

1. I may, without sin, seeing that it is not an essential, give the matter up ; or,

2. It is open to me peacefully, at proper seasons, and in legitimate modes, to continue my petition, and to state the grounds of it to competent authorities ; or,

3. I may seek and join some church sympathising with my views. If in this day of many sects there be not one that does so, I may well suspect my idea to be a crotchet, utterly impractical and valueless.

4. If I be really alone in my thought, and my conviction of its importance still remain, one other course is open. It may not be wise, yet it is lawful, for me to go to the outcast masses who lie beyond the pale of all churches, and seize them for Christ ; and build them up, if I can, into a polity to my liking. Those who denied my fitness to touch up what they believed to be a masterpiece can have no just ground of complaint, when I attempt to excel it on canvas of my own. I may prove a failure, but I shall avoid a sin.

I remember once giving this counsel of peace to one who was uselessly perturbing his own soul, and agitating a whole Society. He answered, "Leave Methodism indeed, after all that I have done for it!" I replied, "You have, Sir, done much for it ; but, 'Quits,' so it has for you!" A young man goes to lodge with a sober couple ; for months all goes on smoothly ; at length he gets into a circle of night-walkers, and now his late incoming is a sore trouble to the worthy pair. They venture to suggest that he either set up a house of his own, or that he go and board with a family they tell him of, who never lock up until after his latest hour. 'A pretty notion, indeed ! leave, after paying money every week as I have done !' 'True, you have paid, but have you not had lodging for your price ?' 'But consider how long I have been with you.' 'I do consider

it, but also remember that for long you kept our rules.' 'But this leaving touches my heart. I love you.' 'Well, young friend, it touches me to hear you say so; and, I assure you, that we love you dearly too; and, moreover, it can be no information to you that we want our chambers let; and if you will, as formerly, observe the customs of our house, none in the town can be so welcome as yourself, whom we have had so long: but, if you are determined not to do so, then our friendship will be closer for our living apart. In such circumstances we can love you better as a neighbour than as an inmate.'

What is to be said of attempting to keep within a church, while avowedly withholding all contributions towards its charges?

It is a wrong to fellow church-members; a breach of the golden rule; a dishonesty to the Pastor; a defiance of the Lord's own ordinance. It is conduct steeped in apostasy and unbelief. "Stop the supplies," always has been, and ever will be, an impotent cry in the Church of Christ. Such a policy at once revolts generous hearts. Gifts and givers multiply, until the persecuting minority, who degraded themselves by adoption of that stingy course, find themselves about as likely to accomplish their purpose as if they had put up their umbrellas to stop the sunbeams. No church ever failed for want of money. The geniuses who can see no better way of reaching brains than that of pinching stomachs may do well enough for tiger-tamers, but are utterly unfit to deal with Ministers of God.

It is but fair to those whose sense of duty impelled them to try and put away persons guilty of this odious conduct, to observe that they ever carefully reserved the right of the poor to free participation in every privilege of the Church. Not lack of cash, but lack of honesty, was always the ground of action.

"Stop the tickets," whether or not it were wise, whether or not it were dignified, was, certainly, a just response to "Stop the supplies." No man who refuses aid can expect service. He who asserts a ministry to have no claim on him, must admit himself to have no claim on them.

Many debates, errors, and fogs of the mind will be precluded by considering that severances on the ground of differences concerning church polity are not—and are not supposed to be—excommunications.

“But is it right to shut a man out of your Society for what will not shut him out of heaven?” Of course it is. The Quakers would do right in ejecting one who *would sing* in their service; or the Baptists, one who *would sprinkle babies* in their chapel. A Romanist may get to heaven, but he ought, for all that, to be expelled from the ranks of the English clergy. In my view, Arminian doctrine is scriptural: I none the more blame the Scotch Congregationalists who sent six young students packing from their Theological Seminary because they contradicted Calvinism. If I gave a musical student notice to quit because I could not think or write for the noise of his fiddle, would that mean either that I cursed him, hated him, or wished him to be homeless for ever? I can quite understand sending him away to-day, and heartily shaking hands with him to-morrow.

Now our dissidents have built for themselves a polity, I gladly recognise them fully as Christian brethren. Their choice is not mine, yet none among themselves *more sincerely* wish them peace, happiness, and prosperity, than I do. But should hereafter—which heaven forbid—some stirring minority in their own community make nameless attacks, defy rule, refuse aid in those daily charges which they help to incur, and determine continually to do so—I hope, in such case, their courts will, as ours did, unite grace not to anathematise with manliness enough to expel.

Mr. Collins from the beginning had distaste of grumblers; he said:—“The Lamb and His company harp and sing, but these creatures, whether they speak of religion or business, doings of men or dealings of God, croak, croak, croak.” I am happy to append the response of Mr. Collins’s earliest and most valued friend, the Rev. H. Breeden. Its strong sayings, excellent cautions, and wise counsels, I the more appreciate, because its author had conscientiously *gone forth* from us, and then, as now, was honourably labouring beyond the fences of the Wesleyan fold.



LEICESTER, *November 15th, 1834.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,—

THERE is nothing new. Bradburn, in his day, down in the fen country, found croakers swarming; and, in his slashing style, said of them:—"These Lincolnshire lying varlets, with their spitfire pamphlets, remind me of those apocalyptic frogs, spawned of the devil." Hot words; but, indeed, none too hot for a brood so base. Sammy was a master of invective, but even his tongue failed to furnish a designation mean enough to express the character of such creeping, crooked, slimy things. Many a blessed work of God have they withstood, and many a glorious revival have they stopped.

Lust of power is the taproot of Church grumbling. Disappointed men become bitter, set up as grievance-mongers, go down to the Philistines to sharpen their weapons, and set the Lord's people at variance by tactics borrowed from political parties.

Poor things! they never pray about the matters of which they complain. If jealous for the Lord of Hosts, why not on their knees more? If murmurers would use their knees more and their tongues less, everybody would gain by the exchange.

Keep from all such, my dear lad; communion with the like of them would lower your tone, hurt your mind, destroy the intimacy of your fellowship with God, and spoil you for soul-saving. Avoid them. Take no notice of them. Keep to your work. Suffer not their evil deeds in your presence: turn the conversation, or retire.

Until the moment I left the Wesleyans, I conscientiously kept every rule; and since I have left them, have never designedly said one word to injure either their cause or the character of one in their ranks. I find enough to do in keeping my own heart, and minding my own work.

The following is my sincere advice to you:—

1. Keep God in your eye every moment.
2. Cherish deep concern for the salvation of immortal souls. This will be done by considering the value of the soul;—the concern of God about it;—the terrors of the hell it is in peril of;—and the glory of the heaven it may win.
3. In every sermon let your heart confide in the wonder-working power of the Holy Ghost, and your tongue tell of the all-redeeming death.
4. As a Methodist Preacher, be loyal to the order of the Connexion. Never, as long as you remain in the body, willingly break one of its rules. If you were a Churchman, I should tell you to be a true one; if a Baptist, a Baptist; since, then, you are a Methodist, be one. Play the man. The end of Methodism is saving souls.
5. Act towards your Superintendent, not as some vain striplings do, but as becometh a godly junior. Love him, help him, honour him, and obey him in the Lord.

I am yours affectionately,

HENRY BREEDEN.

To St. Austell Mr. Collins came easily; it was but a pleasant run of twenty-six miles. Happily, he was, also,

more plentifully provided than one of the most illustrious of his predecessors had been. Adam Clarke says:— "When appointed here, I had a *guinea* allowed me, with which I was to pay toll bars, and keep myself and horse through a journey of near four hundred miles." The issue of such impecunious itinerancy was, that often while the good steed took his corn, his master took the ir, because he could not afford a meal for both.

The Wesleyan premises at St. Austell, chapel and 'teachers' houses, are well situate and good. The immediate surroundings of the town are pleasant, but the country beyond has a bleak and sterile look. The contrast between its rich mineral treasures and its barren soil led a wit to say that, "like the shabby mien of a miser, its aspect does not correspond with its hoards."

"September 9th.—The people generally are expecting good, and already fruit has appeared.

"September 29th.—Hunger for holiness seems rising. After the lovefeast, G. P. told me at the door that he was longing for perfect love. 'Return with me,' I said, 'to the vestry.' He came at a word, prepared, according to the Cornish idea, to wrestle until midnight. I had strength for no such thing, and knew right well that heaven did not wish it. So I just knelt down, and simply besought the Lord to light the poor man's candle at once. It was done.

"Friday, October 4th.—Since entering upon this circuit, I have endeavoured to live near to God. Strife miserably prevails. I have—as Solomon did in his dream—asked the Lord for wisdom. 'Give Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad.'

"October 9th.—As, on the seashore, I read Paul to the Colossians, and meditated, the Holy Ghost mercifully touched my heart. I offered my people to God, and felt baptized and filled with power of God for my people."

In this month, Mr. Collins went away to serve once more his loved old friends in Kent. On his return, the tour was late ere he could reach St. Austell. To his surprise, on nearing home, he saw the chapel lighted up. What is this?—"O, Sir, a mighty revival has begun." That news deferred his rest. He at once, with joy, set

upon the work, unended before midnight, of directing seekers to the Saviour. He soon after wrote:—  
 “Affairs improve. Miracles of mercy take place daily. The town is, at last, fully awake to the fact that there is a Wesleyan chapel in it. The families, noticeably of our faithful, law-abiding, peace-loving men, have been wonderfully visited. In the house of W. V. eight have been saved.” To the agitated Circuit this outgush of grace was as oil on the waves. For a time they could sing:—

All the struggle now is o’er,  
 And wars and fightings cease.

At the December numeration one hundred and twenty additional were found meeting in class. The Journal says:—

“January 1st, 1851.—The good work progresses. Every week increases the number of conversions. Labour increases; and, in fact, overpresses my weakness. I am obliged to seclude myself from current movements, and walk closely with God, In His pavilion I hide me until the strife be overpast; whether it be of Wesleyan agitation, or of Papal aggression. Error is multiform and various; but God is one, and truth is at one. Keeping my mind at home with God, my experience seems to concentrate.”

The records of some of Mr. Collins's pastoral visits at this time are very interesting.

He went to see a sincere but very depressed creature; and, finding her with her babe in her arms, said, “Drop that little one upon the floor.” With an air of wonder at such a request, she refused. “Well,” said he, “for what price would you do it?” “Not for as many sovereigns as there are stars.” “You would not?” “No; I would not.” “And do you really think that you love your feeble children more than the Lord does His?” Her face brightened; and, aided by that lesson from her own maternal love, faith grew strong. The next visit was to poor John Stephens of Tywardreath. The man was very nerve-shattered; but very true-hearted. He had an experience like that Bunyan pictures in the whispering fiends that haunted Christian in the Valley of the

Shadow of Death. He said, "It came hissing from behind that curtain, 'You swore.' Wife says, it is all my poor head. Perhaps it is; but it flurried me. I knew it was a lie; and I thought the devil told it. Be that as it might, I just rose in my bed and cried, 'Lord, I can bleed, or I can burn, but I can't swear. I am Thine;' and, bless God! whether it were my weakness or the devil's malice, that finished it; it has troubled me no more." I pity those who can discern nothing sublime in this integrity for God amid brain-wanderings and bodily decays.

In both Camborne and St. Austell Mr. Collins was taxed to the utmost of his strength by remarkable revivals that called for exhausting labours. This strain, aforetime borne easily, became an oppression to him in a climate so unsuitable for the specialties of his constitution. His remaining in the county after Camborne was against his own judgment. From the first at St. Austell he felt himself an ailing man. I throw together, and subjoin, allusions to these bodily sufferings, of various dates:—

"September 9th, 1850.—I am not well. My Chairman would hold me here, though Sussex, or the Midland, would have been better for me. Cornwall is too humid and too relaxing for me."

A letter to me, bearing date September 26th, says:—"My nervous system is unstrung. You remember how, in her later years, your dear mother wept when she touched the things of God. I am becoming like her. Feeling masters me."

"October 4th.—I am not now able to watch, or to fast, or to make any of those strong efforts which it has been my wont to do.

"October 9th. I am not at all the man I was. I cannot rise so early as I did. I sooner tire. I cannot last through long meetings.

"December 6th.—My elasticity is all gone. The continual wet and warmth of this county subdue my constitution, and take away my energy. I flag. I get drowsy in the daytime. I cannot work half as hard, or walk half as far, as I used to do. My legs feel as if coated with lead."

Another cause more hurtful than the damp inteh

air that enervated, or the toil in the work that wearied him, was the turbulence then prevailing in the Church. "I am daily grieved," he wrote, "by oppositions of men thoroughly infected by an itch for notoriety and wonderfully perverse."

I remember Mr. Collins playfully illustrating for me, by my own fireside, the kind of people with whom he had to do, in a story well showing Cornish selfwill matched by Cornish tact. A certain mine was jointly managed by two agents, Captain James and Captain John. John, by fiery temper, strength of will, and perpetual self-assertion, came, though but equal in place, to be chief in authority. The miners often found the miserable shed in which they left their garments to have proved so poor a shield that the rain had drenched them. They, therefore, asked of Captain James permission to put hooks round the engine house; where, whenever they emerged, hot and sweating, from their gloomy work, they would be certain to find them dry, warm, and comfortable to put on. The kind-hearted man wished to serve them, but foresaw a rock ahead in his Nabal of a colleague. A bright thought occurred, thus graphically expressed:—"Since he is so hoggish, we must deal with him as Paddy does with a pig; pull him the wrong way, that we may get him to go the right." "No!" he then cried, with emphasis, "you shall not; I say you shall not; and so," he added, with a comical wink, "you can go and tell Captain John as soon as you like." They soon obeyed, rehearsed their grievance, and put it to Captain John, "if such conduct were a *fitty* thing." "A churlish fellow!" he replied, "he would like you all to have the rheumatism, I suppose. How would he like it? Not let you have the place, eh! I say you shall. So up with your hooks, and we'll see."

Selfwill is no monopoly of the West; yet those days of turbulence developed it with special plentifulness there. Nor was it in Mr. Collins's earnest, simple, truth-loving nature to cheat perverseness into goodness. Repudiating the swineherd method, he preferred acting upon the *dictum* of the celebrated Sir Barney Roche, who told the Irish Parliament that "*the way to avoid a difficulty*

*is to meet it plump.*" What people call "management" was alien to Mr. Collins's character. He could assert the right, do the right, or suffer for the right; but he could not, even for the right, attempt to win by a trick. The prevailing discord he strove to overcome by grace, truth, love, and evangelism. It is due to say that he was very successful both in winning members and in keeping waverers. Still, do what he might, mischievous results of ecclesiastical strife lay round him, large and terrible. Ever-growing anxiety for the flock of Christ so bitterly affected his soul, and so frequently broke his rest, that at length he was threatened with entire prostration. Too long deaf to the entreaties, he was, at length, compelled to submit to the absolute commands of his medical advisers. They would hear of nothing short of absolute rest. Mr. Collins accordingly requested of Conference permission to have a year of retirement. His petition was granted. A letter, informing me of the fact, remarks:—"I now see the wisdom of those old Levitical arrangements giving intervals of refreshment between the labours of the temple courses. I used to think the most glorious course to be that of those who, crowding much life into little time, worked hard, and died early in the harness. The deaths of Vevers, Fowler, and Bell, have not only convinced me that the strongest powers must give way before unremitted toil conjoined with anxiety, but, also, shown to me how great the loss to the Church is, when men so ripe, experienced, and valuable, are thus removed. I now, therefore, feel that duty to the Lord's cause forbids me, by any act of my own, hurrying life prematurely to its end."

Mr. Collins left St. Austell on Tuesday, August 26th, 1851, with no very fixed plan for the forthcoming year. He says, "We posted to Plymouth, intending to stay there all night; but the attractions of a Regatta had caused every respectable hostelry to be preoccupied; so we took train at once, and went on as far as Totness. There a comfortable hotel furnished every accommodation we needed. The next morning we set forth by the eleven o'clock train for London. At Bristol, Maria complaining of thirst, thinking the stoppage there would

be longer than it proved, I stepped out to get for her a bottle of ginger beer ; the train started instantly, and, to the consternation of us all, we were separated. They wisely waited at Bath, where in half-an-hour, I rejoined them. The result of getting displaced from the express was to deter our arrival by three hours. With no further mishap, we safely reached Spring Well, and were instantly made happily at home by the affectionate and thoughtful hospitality of our dear sister Graham."

The temporary abode of the family there, at Clapham, until after the printing of the Minutes, is the reason of the appearance of Mr. Collins's name for that year in the Lambeth list. A permanent London residence was not his choice : he wrote :—

Your cities vast, your seas of men,  
Have no delight for me.  
I seek a calm sequester'd life,  
A rural privacy.  
I seek a rural privacy,  
Yet would not be alone ;  
So give me, nigh my residence,  
A pretty country town.  
For life has its necessities,  
And man is social made ;  
And towns supply the country's lack  
For company and trade.

With such ideas, it was not wonderful that the memory of Hemel Hempstead should recur to him. His verse records that mighty monarchs and famous healers had loved the place.

'Tis said that Harry Tudor came  
Occasionally down,  
And, liking, gave such privilege  
As kings can give a town.  
What beauty could it be he sought ?  
If landscape were the thing,  
In his selection, then he show'd  
The wisdom of a king.  
For quiet, and for wholesome air,  
Sir Astley Cooper came ;  
And worthy of a doctor's praise  
Are they that do the same.

The neighbourhood selected for Mr. Collins's temporary retreat I leave to his rhymes to describe :—

Thy fertile vale abundance yields  
 Of food for man and beast ;  
 Thy circling hills abate the winds  
 That blow from north and east.  
 How often from those gentle heights  
 Thy beauty I admire !  
 Thy Hall of Commerce, lately rear'd ;  
 Thy glistening, taper spire.  
 As sleeps an infant half undress'd  
 And perfectly at ease,  
 So does thy tranquil picture seem  
 'Mid shade of grateful trees.  
 All we shall need that earth affords,  
 O Hempstead, thou hast got ;  
 And blest be He who gave to thee  
 To stand on such a spot.

Mr. Collins says, "We came here September 18th, 1851. The house is suitable; the air bracing, without being too cold; and, though within an hour of London, we enjoy all the quiet and purity of the country."

At Hemel Hempstead, uninterrupted by public duties, we enjoyed, for a season, calm domestic bliss. His, there, was, in better than the Popish sense, *a religious house*. Every heart in it loved God. I never saw home life more happy, godly, and beautiful.

Writing to one of his brethren, he said :—"One great error of Wesleyans, ay, of Ministers too, is stopping short of perfect love: another is neglect of the first race the Holy Ghost plants within their children. O, ring your children up for the Lord from the cradle: mind, from the cradle." True to his own counsel, Mr. Collins took care that godly discipline began its moulding influence upon his children in their infancy. As father, and chief in his house, he held himself responsible for his full share of training work. In him a pattern and an authority of goodness was always present in the home.

Veiled from publicity, hidden from honour, but now sweetly embalmed for it in surviving memory, the mother devoted herself to her children. She never sent them to any other teacher. Thoroughly competent, she diligently instructed them herself. Her aim was not to encourage in them showy display of accomplishments, but by enrichment of the mind, culture of the under-



standing, and training of the character, to fit them for the Master's service. She succeeded well. They followed Christ, and found happiness in paths of love and obedience. For her children, as for herself, she acted upon the command, "Come out, and be separate." Their companionship was refused to the ungodly: their early pleasures, the most delightful young hearts can have, were ministries of mercy to the poor. Piano or harp and voice were daily heard blending harmoniously, but always in songs of Zion. Their lessons and their learning circled round the Word of God. I say, their learning; for of Emmy, now in heaven, I may record that she was no despicable Grecian and a very good Hebraist.

The plan of a week will give interesting information of the *curriculum* of this Hemel Hempstead domestic College.

"Monday. We read reports, from all sources, of Missionary work among the Jews, and specially search those Scriptures which seem to concern them. This we conclude with prayer on their behalf. In this devotional work my children greatly delight me.

"Tuesday. 'Barney' (his brother, a university graduate) and I stick to Greek.

"Wednesday. He, I, and Emmy work at Hebrew.

"Thursday. Mamma and Maria join us at Latin.

"Friday. All to French.

"Saturday. We have a Scripture conversation. Thus we keep from rust."

I find that the rule was to turn out twice in the day, either to work in the garden, to enjoy some light outdoor game, or to explore one of the many lovely walks and fieldways of the neighbourhood. These rural excursions were modes of going about doing good. Mr. Collins ever seemed to have a gift for the necessitous, a pretty book for the child, and a word in season for all. Miss Collins says, "A walk with Papa was the greatest treat either Emmy or I could possibly have. He was sure to bring us some new road: or find for us some beautiful flowers; or take us to some interesting person. His ingenuity in devising pleasure seemed inexhaustible, and the tact with which he suited things to our taste was wonderful. At that time Aunt Maria first brought

us acquainted with Moon's system of reading for the blind. Our kitchen became the meeting place of a blind readers' class. Papa's interest in this work never relaxed. In every subsequent place of residence he always strove to find out, get books for, and instruct such sufferers."

At Hemel Hempstead one great source of improvement mingled with enjoyment was a family literary association. As Friday came round, each had, after tea, to produce, in turn, an original paper. The commencement and laws of this hearth-circle Institute will best be learned from Mr. Collins's pleasant Inaugural Address,

Dear members of this learned sect,  
I give you loving greeting ;  
My duty is, you recollect,  
First to address your meeting.

My task, as it appears to me,  
Should be, at its formation,  
To chronicle the history  
Of this association.

By this, then, let all people know.  
In this affair concern'd,  
That February fifty-two  
Produced a band so learn'd.

On day the sixth, our party came,  
At five o'clock on Friday ;  
And, if I may the party name,  
First, there's Mamma, so tidy.

Then sage Avuncu', in his place ;  
Then Emmy, always hearty ;  
Maria next, with cheerful face,  
And I, make up the party.

The day's demands make breakfast brief,  
And dinner is for hunger ;  
But tea comes, in a sweet relief,  
With conversation longer.

Great Johnson talk'd, and drank his tea,  
That prince in conversation :  
Though few can talk as well as he,  
Tea brings us inspiration.

So, as we drank, the talk began  
About another movement,  
Some simple, pleasant, weekly plan  
Of mutual improvement.

A paper of domestic news,  
 In which we all might mingle,—  
 Shall we have this? or shall we choose  
 To keep our papers single?

"The mingle plan," said two, "we'll have,"  
 The other two demurring;  
 For reasons good, which then they gave,  
 The single plan preferring.

The chairman, feeling all the weight  
 Of his august position,  
 Advanced to give the grave debate  
 A permanent decision.

"I give my casting vote," said he,  
 "For single papers weekly:"  
 So, to a clear majority,  
 The others yielded meekly.

"Five weeks," said he, "we'll try this plan;"  
 And all said, "Let it be so;"  
 "Then talk the matter o'er again;"  
 And all said, "We agree so."

Five minutes, and not more than ten,  
 Are granted us for reading;  
 Two farthings we shall forfeit when  
 We fail or are exceeding.

This is the law, I certify;  
 So don't complain, or alter:  
 I shall not be surprised if I  
 Should be the first defaulter.

Mamma's was the next venture in competition. Her lines present too true a photograph of houses as in many Circuits Ministers' wives find them. The verses have a cheerful ring about them. Though brought up in affluence, through all her itinerancy Mrs. Collins never shrunk from hardship; never worried her husband with murmurings. Her children were cultured to refinement, but taught to hate fastidiousness. Without indebtedness to Epictetus, she concurred with him that "happiness lies in ourselves, not in our circumstances." Give her her family, and she had felicity quite independent of the town, or street, she lived in; or of the chattels by which she was surrounded. That excellent definition of faults, "Things to be mended," commanded her assent, and she applied it alike whether to defects of character or of accommodation.

Where'er the Conference marks our lot,  
Should it be more or less remote,  
I'll always think upon that spot

As home.

Though weeds may grow where flowers should bloom,  
And paint be needed for the room,  
Fear not, when we the rule assume

Of home.

We soon will trace the garden rim,  
And plant it out with flowers prim,  
And all the premises make trim,

Like home.

Then, if cracked teacups, limping chair,  
Tables three-legg'd, and jugs be there  
Unhandled; neither fret nor care,

It's home.

Though saucers few be in beaufet,  
And fewer cups and spoons are set,  
Still will we try our tea to get

At home.

And when, officially, we're told,  
Circumstances cannot be controll'd,  
Or make beds new, that now are old,  
'Tis home.

Home gives music to twelve other verses, in which  
Mamma turns prophet, but foresees no cloud.

The next contribution was by Emily. It was called  
"Memory's Dream." Without printing it, I may, as  
she also is now beyond earshot of praise, say that it  
was a beautiful reflex of her tender, gentle spirit.

The family that could furnish such literary homespun  
as was presented week by week at this happy Sympos-  
ium, must be of more than common culture and power.  
Of the remnant papers I will reproduce just one from  
Mr. Collins's own pen;—

Not *all at once* creation rose,  
Its Author to make known;  
Six days to work that Wisdom chose,  
Which might have chosen one.  
Whence He would have us understand,  
For He has made it clear,  
That when we take good work in hand,  
We ought to persevere.

Not all at once the king of light  
 Assumes his southern throne,  
 Evoking from the depths of night  
 An instantaneous noon.  
 In gradual might he brings the day  
 Upon our hemisphere ;  
 And shows, by his increasing ray,  
 How we should persevere.

Not all at once the forest oak  
 Becomes a mighty tree ;  
 Not all at once the coral rock  
 Emerges from the sea ;  
 Not all at once the ripen'd corn  
 Fills up the golden ear ;  
 But each production, in its turn,  
 Tells us to persevere.

A hammer's strokes one day I heard ;  
 So, first they seem'd to me ;  
 But, looking up, a little bird  
 Perch'd in a filbert tree.  
 'T was God that little bird had brought  
 To find provision there ;  
 And by its motions I was taught  
 How we should persevere.

Not all at once the filbert's shell  
 Would yield its kernel's store,  
 But Tomtit plied his weapon well,  
 And strokes were added more,  
 Till on the mark the final stroke  
 Brought him delicious cheer ;  
 And his achievement plainly spoke,  
 Be sure you persevere.

Hid, as the kernel in the shell,  
 The wealth of wisdom lies :  
 Not every student will prevail  
 To win the precious prize.  
 Who will ? The meaner creatures show  
 By instinct they declare ;  
 "'Tis not the swift, 'tis not the slow,  
 'Tis they who persevere."

The best and greatest of the earth  
 Began, at first, as we ;  
 Who gain'd, by their transcendent worth,  
 Bright immortality.  
 Not all at once, but steady pace  
 They held, and hoped as we, and fear'd  
 And only gained the arduous race  
 Because they persevered.

But Heaven holds out a nobler goal  
 Than honourable fame ;  
 As the salvation of the soul  
 Is better than a name.  
 And He who spoke for God below  
 Proposed the seed, the corn, the leaven,  
 That sure, progressive course to show  
 By which we rise to heaven.

The friends of the Circuit found it easy of belief that Providence had directed Mr. Collins to his location among them. Agitated and poor, they had been compelled to give up one of their Ministers. To make things worse, the Superintendent, soon after Conference, was laid aside by a railway accident, and his colleague, also, by an attack of small-pox. Mr. Collins found free space to use returning strength as fast as it came. He writes :—"My ordinary occupations are, a class in the Sunday school on Lord's day mornings, a sermon on Sunday evening, preaching once in the week, Society class and three Tract Districts."

These tract distributions involved Mr. Collins in controversy with a clergyman of the neighbourhood, who, following in his wake, gathered and sent back the little books with the following message :—

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, *December 9th, 1851.*

SIR,

I beg to return three Dissenting tracts left by you in the houses of certain Church persons living in Queen Street.

The "divisions and offences," caused by Dissent, are a grievous hindrance to the ignorant in their search after truth.

That the poor, already too much perplexed by seeing around them, what they call "so many religions," should have such publications thrust upon them, containing teaching contrary to that of their own spiritual pastors, is worse than useless.

I am Sir,

Your faithful Servant,  
 CHARLES LIFFORD.

Of the "publications" so stigmatised, the first was a warning against intemperance ; the second, an exhortation to immediate religious decision ; the third had for its theme, "Salvation by Christ." If to teach such things really did contradict "their spiritual pastors," the more earnestly that were done, the better.

Terrible responsibility comes upon any man who claims, within the eight or ten square miles of a parish, to be the only one having right to speak unto men of their souls; the only one at liberty to tell them of the Son of God their Saviour. If "living epistles, epistles of Christ," will commend a Minister, Mr. Collins could have produced enough to have authenticated a whole bench of Bishops. But a commission, sealed and verified by the Divine Head of the Church Himself, was nothing to this Curate, unless a Prelate indorsed it.

With the rejected tracts a Puseyite pamphlet also came, thus labelled; "Mr. Lifford hopes that Mr. Collins will give the enclosed 'Country Curate's Protest' a little patient consideration." So invited, Mr. Collins employed his leisure, not only in considering, but in confuting it.

The author of the "Protest" appears to have been sorely tried by the necessity of being courteous to a Methodist Preacher. For the guidance of others, he chronicles, at the expense of a page, both his struggle and his victory. "Several modes of address," he says, "successively occurred to me, and were successively dismissed. At last, *it struck me* that I should be extricated by just using the ordinary appellation common among us." How graphic! Irresistibly we are drawn alongside the desk of this troubled clerk, and behold him severing the knots of this huge difficulty:—"What shall I call this fellow? 'Reverend?' Impossible. 'Esteemed or Respected Friend?' Revolting. 'My dear Sir? Too complimentary. I have it!—'Sir, simply '*Sir.*' Ay, that will do! So addressing him, I escape being uncivil, and leave altogether reserved the point whether he be good Sir, or bad Sir." This wonderful achievement of charity accomplished, the author becomes so delighted, that, though personally concerned, he cannot withhold praise felt to be due to himself, for the self-denial which had avoided sarcastic language, of which precedent might have been found in the Bible; for following the meek and holy example of the Master; and for obeying Paul's admonition against wrath and evil-speaking. Were virtues scarce in him, that the man made such an ado about the use of a formula that a de-

ent plough-boy would have taught him? Had the meditative Curate pondered the great Example longer, perhaps, beyond the poor lesson of civility, he also might have learned not to "protest" at all against the effort of others to do good. "John answered, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us. *But Jesus said, Forbid him not.*"

Mr. Collins's tract proved to be popular, and went through several editions; it was scriptural and well argued; but the foeman was not worthy of his steel. A case of rural logic, cited with *gusto*, and pronounced to be *crushing* and *irrefutable*, reveals the blinking dimness of the narrow cleric's intellect:—"One of your *read men* advised a poor man to take his wife to the meeting house to return thanks to Almighty God for safe deliverance in childbirth,—advice which was silenced at once by the unanswerable question, 'How can my wife be church'd at meeting?'" If Her Majesty have many unfortunate lieges on whom an argument like that would press with a feather's weight, the sooner Her Commissioners for Education enlarge their stroke of business the better.

Besides service rendered at home, letters show that with his first rallying strength Mr. Collins re-commenced labours of outgoing:—

"April 14th.—After preaching at Tipton, memory of my late beloved colleague, Thomas Hudson, made it pleasant to me to see his brother. It might have been the man himself, so like is he, spectacles and all.

"April 23rd.—At Leamington. I remember when this town was only just rising; now, it has twenty thousand inhabitants. Cleanness, stillness, romantic beauty, trees and houses intermingled, make the place lovely. But the gentle, courteous ways of the people endear it more.

"May 20th.—At the District Meeting we have had four candidates. One, J. B., much interested me. A wealthy uncle bore the charge of his education, and wished to introduce him into a lucrative business; but the youth told him, 'I must preach.' 'Well, it won't pay; but, have your way, I'll send you to Oxford, and make a Parson of you.' 'No. By Methodism I have



been saved, and for Methodism I must work.' 'Tut, tut, the boy's mad! I will spend no more on such a crack-brain.'

"In the meeting Mr. Jackson spoke kindly of my reply to the Curate. A committee of fathers will meet to advise with me in regard of taking a Circuit at the Conference: privately, Mr. Mason counsels me to have another year of quiet."

I doubt not the wisdom of that advice. Mr. Collins's power had so diminished that—a new thing in his experience—slumberers could repose under his pulpit. He notes,—

"June 15th.—The day was so wet that we had but fifteen at the afternoon service. I was freed from care concerning the collection, by observing that the chief trustee had so little anxiety that he slept contentedly well-nigh through the sermon."

During that time of physical weakness there was less of animation, and a voice much diminished in volume from its former wont. The Stewards of Leeds Third, and of Nottingham North, sought, during this year, to engage Mr. Collins to them; but both alike, on hearing him, suggested doubts whether in their large chapels he would be audible to the congregation. He was not himself so conscious of this temporary difference of vocal force as others were. Boanerges could scarcely believe himself a whisperer.

In July, he took one of his much-loved southern evangelistic tours. He had good success in soul-winning at St. Leonard's, Mayfield, Ticehurst, Goudhurst, and Knockholt. He writes:—"Knelstone Farm, the new home of the Austens, is larger and better than their former one. Yesterday morning, I heard one of my own children preach. He and his brothers were excavators: rough creatures, it was no easy task attacking them: I did, however, and the Lord gave them to me. This one has become quite gentle and polished in his way: he preached very well. I am writing this in the garden. Before me is a beautiful scene. I can see many vessels passing the port of Rye. I can see Icklesham church and mill, and Dr. Fearon's church on Fairlight Down; still further, the view stretches to the heaths and hills of

Sussex. Between me and Fairlight there is the Marsh, a large rich level, eight or ten miles, over which the sea once rolled, but where thousands of sheep and many herds of kine feed now. The line of railway crosses the Marsh, and a sluice drains it, down which a barge in full sail is just passing. The slopes trending towards the Marsh are covered with hop-gardens, of which the deep green is very beautiful to look upon. This is a glorious country; hill and dale, wood and water, field and sea, mixture yet agreement, blend in the lovely whole that lies before me."

On his return, Mr. Collins preached in London as a supply for Ministers gone to Conference, both at Great Queen Street, and at City Road.

A letter, dated July 17th, 1852, says:—"I have sent word to the Stationing Committee, that if there be any place in which regard for the public good makes it desirable to keep up the number of Ministers, although by reason of agitation funds run short, if only there be a suitable house, I am willing to go upon diminished stipend. I have further said, that though I now think myself able to take an easy Circuit, yet if, through the defections of these troublous times, they have difficulty in finding stations for all the brethren, I waive all claim to an appointment, and will contentedly remain as I am another year." The generosity of this offer will be apparent, when we add that, declining all aid from our funds, Mr. Collins, as a Supernumerary, was living entirely at his own charge. The issue was, that further rest was granted. Mr. Collins writes:—"Not being appointed, I, with my family, took a little excursion to Clapham, to Brighton, and to Lewes. On our return to Hemel Hempstead, I applied myself to my usual occupations, preaching more frequently, and taking also a second class, left vacant by the emigration of its leader."

The following notice of a book, in a letter to a friend, shows how he kept up his habit of critical and observant reading:—"Have you seen Isaac Taylor's 'Wesley and Methodism?' The philosopher is out of his track. In the way of being or doing good, he has nothing to teach which Wesleyans did not know long before. Some of the things which we prize,—*e.g.*, class-meetings,—he

dislikes; and in his opposition, very likely unintentionally, but certainly grossly, and, as Methodists well know, absurdly, misrepresents. The book is thin: its knowledge of the early Methodists is about what might be expected from a hasty reading up. To those who through life have been conversant with them, his estimates cannot but appear manifest blundering. He places Charles Wesley before John. Courteous phrases cannot veil his little regard for the writings of Wesley, and his real contempt for those of Fletcher. Lady Huntingdon and George Whitefield, though assuredly narrower alike in intellect and influence, rate with him as the great leaders of the eighteenth century movement. The book will add not much to its author's fame, and nothing to our instruction. If you have not bought it, save your money."

In October, after preaching for Missions at Ampthill, Mr. Collins says:—"On Monday, I went a pilgrimage to Elstow, to see the birthplace of Bunyan. The house has been rebuilt. We entered the cottage that occupies the site: it is small, having but one lower and one upper room, with a pantry under the stairs. A strong old beam is the only remnant of the original cot. In consideration of a gratuity, we were permitted to take some small splinters for my relic-loving friends. While my companion got them, I said to the woman, 'That timber is from an ancient tree; but I know of an older, it is called *the tree of life*.' 'Indeed,' she replied, 'I never heard of such a tree.' 'Never heard of it?' I said. 'A well-known book tells of it: the first part of which was written by a man whose name was Moses; one David also added another part. Do you know that book?' 'Well, I'm no *scholar*, Sir. I can't read, so I don't know anything about books.' This ignorance of the Bible, and, of all places on earth, in John Bunyan's cottage, astonished me. On leaving, in the street we met a grey-haired man; wishing, if I might, to gather up any floating, local traditions, I accosted him. 'Old friend,' said I, 'we have come a long way this morning to look at the birthplace of one John Bunyan, who was born in these parts. Do you know anything about him?' 'What was he, Sir?' 'Well, they tell me that

he was a great preacher.' '*A preacher! I knows nothing about such as them. I goes to church.*' Thinking I might speak with the man of Jesus, though I had failed concerning John, I asked, 'Do you know the Head of the Church?' 'The Head of the Church,' he repeated inquiringly, 'the Head of the Church? it must be old Whitbread, sure enough.' 'What? a brewer the head of the Church?' 'Must be him, Sir; *he owns all the parish!*' Passing on, I tried another venerable-looking villager. 'Do you know anything of John Bunyan?' 'I've heard of him.' 'What have you heard?' 'Well, they tell me that he was oft in jail.' 'Oft in jail? Why, how was that? Did he poach the quality's game? or did he knock people on the head in the highway? or what?' 'Well, Sir, I can't say: but they do say he was oft in jail.'"

A Bunyan school speedily set up at Elstow would be at once a fair memorial of the man, and, unless Mr. Collins's specimens of the peasantry were specially unfortunate, a very necessary boon for the village.

Hemel Hempstead leisure, so happily filled with home enjoyments, pleasant excursions, and easy labours of good, ended with the current year. A ministerial resignation in the Bradford East Circuit, which, if not judiciously met, might have issued in disastrous consequences, led the President to write and urge Mr. Collins to proceed thither forthwith, and supply the unexpected and perilous lack. So requested, Mr. Collins, with his usual self-denial for the Lord's sake, without question and without delay, leaving his family, set forth and arrived there safely, though late, on Friday, January 7th, 1853.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### BRADFORD.

VERY characteristically Mr. Collins commenced work in Bradford by a sermon upon God's command to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 1: "Walk before Me, and be thou perfect." He says:—"The largeness of Eastbrook affected me at first, but as I proceeded my soul felt liberty." He got into full swing of Circuit work at once. The record of the first week mentions a profitable meeting with Prayer-leaders; comfort received in comfort given to a poor widow; pleasant intercourse with a lively little society at Calverley; Psalm lxxxi. expounded to a congregation of six at Prospect Place, one of whom, as she listened, entered into full salvation; preaching at Farsley, where the service had to be conducted in a loft, because dissidents had locked the Wesleyans out of their own chapel; late hour invitations declined; and Yorkshire hospitality discerned to be a perilous kindness.

On Tuesday, January 18th, 1853, on returning to Hemel Hempstead for his family, he found his children both unwell: influenza had prostrated them. After protracting his stay until Wednesday 26th, as they still continued too feeble to permit of removal, sorrowfully he returned again to his new labour alone.

A letter, dated Friday, 28th, after telling of safe arrival and of weary labours of book-fixing, says:—"There is zeal for Missions here. The collectors would have no subscriptions lost: three already have applied for mine. Several Ministers have called upon me. Brother Felvus spoke very fraternally. He strengthened my heart by narration of a great work done here some years ago, and encouraged me to strike at once in the name of the Lord. In the order of special services, now being held,

Mr. Carr preached last night, with good influence. In the prayer-meeting a very simple-minded person—in from the country—came to the Communion rail. I asked, ‘Are you convinced that you are a sinner?’ ‘O yes.’ ‘Are you sorry for your sins?’ ‘Very.’ ‘Will you forsake them all?’ ‘I should like.’ ‘The decision must lie with you: will you?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘When?’ ‘When God pleases.’ ‘My friend, God says now.’ ‘Very well, then I say now.’ ‘Who—by his own death—redeemed such poor sinners as you?’ ‘Christ.’ ‘Do you love Him for doing so?’ ‘Indeed I do.’ ‘Tell Him so, then.’ At the word, the teachable old creature cried aloud:—‘I love Thee, O Christ; for Thou diedst for me.’ In such correspondence we continued, until we both, and all around us, were gloriously happy together.”

On Saturday, January 29th, depressing tidings reached Mr. Collins. His journal says:—‘The account of Maria is most distressing. Her sickness shows itself now unmistakeably as typhus fever. The doctor considers her in danger. Over the letter bearing to me such sad news, I shed many tears: it seemed to open the grave before me again. In the afternoon it fell to my lot to inter a child. The service so affected me that it was with difficulty that I could get through. I drew near to the bereaved mother, and grasped her hand, but my heart was so full that I dared not trust myself to speak.”

A letter to Mrs. Collins, written the same day, wisely leaves this paternal feeling untold. It says:—“While we accept the perfect will of God, it is our duty to use all means for the child. *Mention the Saviour to her as often as you can.* I have pledged some good people here to remember us in their secret petitions. If the next communications bring no word of improvement, I shall think nothing of the journey, but hasten to you at once.

“P.S.—Last night I preached on Jacob’s princely name (Gen. xxii. 27, 28.). The Spirit descended. Many became Israels in prayer. Seekers came round in crowds. While some were saved, others entered into perfect love; and, so far as from this morning’s visitation I can see, the glory abides, and all faces shine.”

Another letter, dated February 2nd, carries on the narrative :—"Blessed be God ! Your comforting packet has turned my sorrow into joy. On Sunday last, it being my duty to prepare for the Lord's work, I claimed merciful aid. I told my Master how much I wished to do something for Him, but that in order to do it I needed a free and quiet mind. While, to do His will, I sought the good of His children in the church, I ventured to cast upon Him the care of my child at home. In these exercises of faith my mind grew calm. On Lord's day morning, in the public prayer, I brought up the affliction of my family. God's people joined earnestly in the intercession ; and it rejoices me to learn that it was in that very hour that the marked change for the better had its commencement. That fact shall ever be remembered among the special mercies of my Father God.

"I was enabled to throw myself thoroughly into the special services. God was nigh me all day. At night many were gathered in. The numerators vary ; some say twenty ; some forty. It matters not, the Lord knows. He makes my poor rusty key fit and turn in the Bradford lock better than I might have expected. Annette was over with me. It pleased me to see her as busy among penitents as she used to be, in happy old days, in Sussex and Kent.

"Dear Em, our affliction is a preparation. Just before Jericho fell, the Lord said to Joshua, 'Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise Israel again the second time.' (Joshua v. 2.) What a time of pain and humiliation was that ! but it prepared them for great victories. That lesson is for us. When the Lord hath made us toward and docile in His hands, then will He use us, for we shall be fit for His use.

"I never needed to say to you, Care for my children ; but, pray care for yourself. Do not overdo. May the good Lord raise up the children, build us all up, and in His own good time, bring us together !"

Journal notes will best show Mr. Collins's course in his new sphere :—

"Tuesday, February 8th.—Attending a meeting at Kirkgate, I was much touched by the few words of the

Rev. Henry Fish. Referring to that loss of voice which has for a long time, withheld him from the work he loves, he said with a great effort, which after all, attained but to a whisper:—"I have sweet music *in* me, but I have no instrument. My heart burns, but my tongue fails. Though laid aside, yet not forsaken. I am a happy man, and I shall be happy for ever!"

"Wednesday, 9th.—I conducted a special service at Idle. The Lord was with us. Some took hold of full salvation, among them the young Preacher. Returning home, I learned how exceedingly beautiful Bradford looks at night from the hill sides, when the lights of all its mills are gleaming.

"Thursday, 10th.—The man who drove me to Calverley told me how some years ago, being stimulated by reading the Life of Hester Ann Rogers, he sought and believed himself to have found the blessing of perfect love. On making confession, in his class, of God's gift unto him, the Leader, without one word of either counsel or congratulation, passed him over with the remark, half sarcastically given:—"You are altogether beyond me. Justification I understand. Concerning such things as you now now speak of I know nothing." Discouraged by such cool treatment, his faith faltered, and, in short space, his experience sank back to its former level. I explained to him how Jesus is 'unto us sanctification.' He received the Word, and with it glorious bliss, as we rode along. After preaching, I detained the Society, and narrated to them such fresh triumphs of grace as I had witnessed in our recent services. I called upon the people to rejoice with me for these, and also for the restoration of my children."

"Tuesday, 15th.—I went over to my father in Leeds. My arrival was opportune. Gracious Providence often shines in little things. Barney was in trouble. That morning, only just as he was about to set off to his ordination, he discovered, to his dismay, that £4. 17s. 6d. would be required as fees by sundry official persons. He knew not where to get the money. A five pound note from my purse brightened his spirits, and sent the poor lad, free from care to face his Bishop."

"Thursday, 17th.—I went to tea with Mrs. K. At



my coming she went away to change her dress, and returned much finer, with a cap noticeably grand with artificial flowers. Believing the metamorphosis intended to be a mark of respect to me, it seemed right that I should prevent such unnecessary trouble for the future, by expressing to her my views of the duty and wisdom of plain attire. Disputatiousness is in these days so rife, and church members so incline to debate with their teachers and to blame their brethren, that, for a season, prudent Pastors think it wise to administer as little rebuke and as much encouragement as they conscientiously can. Speaking strong words on the subject of dress to unprepared people the first time you meet them, like 'putting new cloth on an old garment,' is more likely to rend their tempers than to mend their ways. My censure, though apparently abrupt, was not thoughtlessly given; not given until I had reason to think that the good woman could bear, and also that she might profit by my testimony. She, as I hoped, took it meekly; stated that for years she had refused adornments; that, though borne away by prevalent custom, she still believed self-denial in regard of such things to be the more excellent way; and promised prayerful consideration of what I had said."

"Thursday, 24th.—Three men came begging for the widows and orphans of poor sufferers killed at Little Dale Colliery last week. While I was seeking a little cash to give them, who, to my surprise, should walk in but mother and Barney? They had indeed written; but the *undated* letter, which preceded their appearance about an hour, only said, 'We shall come to-morrow.' That the writer's 'to-morrow' would be the reader's 'to-day' had not occurred to me. With such brief notice, and the larder in after-dinner condition, my inexpert auxiliar had no small difficulty in presenting things shapely, or with such a look of hospitality as I desired. However, luckily, the guests knew my love, and seemed to partake of the remnants with relish."

"Sunday, 27th.—Meeting a young man, I asked, 'Have you been to church or to chapel?' He replied, 'Neither. My Sabbath is over. I am an Israelite.' 'I love Abraham and his children,' I replied. 'Much

obliged to you, Sir, for your kind words,' he said. He then proceeded to tell me how the Talmud affirmed Abraham to have been tried ten times, and to have been faithful in all. I answered, 'I do not know much of the Talmud, but I love the Torah, (the Law;) it is very precious to me.' I observed to him that many of his brethren were beginning to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah. 'For interest,' he replied. In further talk he mentioned Austria and Russia. I asked, 'Are not your people persecuted there?' He said, 'They were.' I asked, 'Are they here?' He answered, 'No. England is the freest country in the world.' I asked, 'Are the Scriptures largely circulated in Austria or Russia?' He said, 'They are not.' 'Mark,' I said, 'the chief lovers of the Scriptures are the chief friends of your nation.' He quickly retorted, 'But if you Christians believed as we do, you would be better friends still.' I urged him to note the fact that from the time the Hebrew people had fully rejected Him whom we believed to be their long-promised Messiah, Providence had seemed to reject them; their daily sacrifice had ceased; their holy temple had been destroyed; their genealogies were lost; and their nation in exile and scattered to the four winds. 'All this,' said he, 'is for our sins. Our fathers neglected the Sabbatic years; held men in bondage despite the return of jubilee; they robbed, and killed, and did evil.' I replied, 'Weigh well, whether, after all, these long-lasting troubles have not come because they killed Him who is greater than all.' I was much interested in the conversation. One of his sayings, showing wide departure from ancient Hebrew faith, grieved me. 'Messiah, whensoever He may come, will not be God, as you Christians affirm Jesus to be, but a man like unto Moses.' "

"Tuesday, March 1st.—Barney has gone to his curacy. Mother and I get on cosily. Nobody is with us except the charwoman, who reigns in the kitchen. She tells mother she knows that she is clumsy, and wonders at my patience. Conscious of defect, she strives after improvement, and gets better every day. I have indeed lectured her gently on such trifles as going to bed, and leaving all the windows and doors unfastened.

Nay, this morning I even plucked up courage to suggest that by a sweep, at least once a week, the back yard might be made to look all the better."

In a letter to his children, dated March 11th, 1853, Mr. Collins says:—"I rejoice at the thought of soon having you with me again. There will be work for us all in Bradford. You must no longer hang on me, but help in matters of faith and prayer. O that I might see the full renewal of every member here! For yourselves reach out in faith: you know the way. Hold fast the promise of the Spirit. The earnest you possess; the fulness is pledged to you. The Lord says to each of you, 'I am thy God.' Bring your minds to that Divine assertion. Accept it. Say, 'O Lord, my heart responds to what Thou informest me. I believe that Thou art mine; mine by donation; mine by most cordial, delighted, continuous reception.'"

On Tuesday, March 15th, Mr. Collins went to Hemel Hempstead to fetch his family. Maria was well recovered, but Jane Vivian, the servant maiden, though free from fever, was extremely feeble. It had been planned that all on the Saturday ensuing should start for Bradford. Jane did not fear the journey; the medical man thought hopefully of her readiness; all who had seen her through the course of her affliction pronounced her to be satisfactorily amending; yet, on his arrival, her altered look and manifest prostration of strength awoke in Mr. Collins grave doubts of the propriety of so early a removal. On Wednesday she was able to leave her room, and appeared cheerful when at various times during the day her master went and conversed with her as she reclined on the couch. Early in the evening, wishing to retire, she set forth to her chamber, leaning upon Catharine, her fellow servant. When about half way up the stairs, she fainted. At the alarm the surgeon was sent for: but ere he could reach, though he was not long, life was extinct.

Mr. Collins says, "Death scarce left an imprint. She slept in Jesus. Looking on her placid face, a feeling, more than once experienced in presence of blessed dead, came over me, well expressed in that much controverted hymn commencing,—

Ah, lovely appearance of death!  
What sight upon earth is so fair!"

Jane was a Camborne convert. She walked humbly with God, and continued faithful to the end. Home letters sent during her affliction attested her final trust in the Saviour, conscious preparedness for death, and good hope through grace. As her friends were remote, Mr. Collins saw her remains borne with due respect to the grave, whither, as a sincere mourner, he followed them.

The family left Hemel Hempstead on Wednesday, March 23rd; and arrived safely at their new home in time to hear Dr. Newton preach in Eastbrook chapel on "Glorying in the Cross." Mr. Collins observes, "I had heard the sermon years before, in Scotland, but it touched me *as at the first*." This notice is very characteristic of Dr. Newton. Some, who every week could command days of quiet in the study, have spoken despisingly of that great man. They have said, "He drove a large trade with a small capital." In reply, I first thank God that *it was a large trade*, which is more than can be said of the deeds of the pedlers who have traduced it; then, further, I say that, during those years in which Providence gave him opportunity for labours of composition, he produced more and better than his critics; and I add, that when, under altered circumstances, calls of duty kept him constantly on the wing, when toils and travel, that would have broken ordinary strength, left him no possibility of fabricating novelties, then the value of unmatched God-given compensations appeared. The majesty of his presence, the volume and music of his voice, the naturalness of his manner, the heartiness of his tone, the unrivalled power of adaptation, caused that nothing he had ever made grew stale. Few of his detractors ever delivered a sermon that seemed to its auditors as fresh the first time as Dr. Newton's did the fiftieth. The growths of his youth kept the dew on them to the end. His flowers never lost their perfume, nor his fruit its bloom. The same sermon, as given by him, has riveted a Conference, thrilled an American Congress, blessed many a city gathering, and many a rural congregation; while, in each case, it came home to

the listeners with all the freshness of newborn thought, and all the fitness of a discourse composed for the occasion.

After a Communion service at Eastbrook Mr. Collins writes:—"I do not remember, ever before in all my life, administering to so large a number. I cannot hurry in religious services: any appearance of doing so is distasteful to me. The service, though I had assistance, occupied two hours.

"Sunday, May 1st.—At Calverley. The day was warm; the walk, six miles. I was very happy in my work; but very weary at night. No conversions were known to us. Once, I should have been miserable without visible fruit. I strive as faithfully as ever for it; but, in troublous times, and in stony fields, the Lord has taught me that hardness of men must not abate my gladness in Him. In Him I will rejoice, even 'though the fig-tree shall not blossom.'

"Thursday, May 5th.—Necessary calls upon sixty families to solicit accommodation for Ministers at the ensuing Conference, I have found to be a means of grace. All influence I win in the people's homes I purpose to use for the Lord's glory and the people's good."

On Monday, May 16th, a terrible fire consumed Wood and Walker's mill. The next morning, while many workpeople were within the charred walls, seeking to secure any property the flames had spared, huge masses of masonry came crashing down. Four were killed, and several were wounded. Among the slain was Mr. Jennings, a Leader and an excellent man. Mr. Collins says, "His joyous, eager countenance, as he sat the night before under the Word, had been noticed by many. His widow is a pattern of resignation. To every wounded man, and to every bereaved family, I have felt it my privilege to become a bearer of consolation."

"Tuesday, May 17th.—Our District Meeting began at Keighley. It was the first ever held in that town. Our Chairman having resigned, the President, the Rev. John Scott, came down from London, opened the meeting, and then desired the brethren to select one from among themselves as their Chairman. The choice fell upon Mr. Stinson. I felt my heart full of gratitude for a place

again in the active service; yet without the cares of superintendancy, which, at present, I fear that I could not bear.

“Friday, May 27th.—I spent some time, happily, with Mr. Brice, in his study, in prayer.

“June 1st.—Extension Fund Meeting at Leeds. Dr. Bunting presided. How quick of fence, and vigorous in the conduct of affairs, he yet continues! At two o'clock in the afternoon, the younger men seemed more hungry than eloquent. The Doctor remarked, ‘You faint too soon. It is too early yet to confess that we “our bodies feel.”’ However, the hungry party carried it, and adjourned to dinner. Some one spoke slightly of the London meeting. With ready pleasantry he lifted that matter out of the way by replying, ‘We certainly had not all the sense of the Connexion there; no, nor all the nonsense either.’ The gathering never rose to the fine Centenary fervour; nor did it seem to me that the wealthy gave very heavily. Still, the total sum, over £9,000, was a fair result. Mr. Farmer, as his wont is, did nobly. He had given £1,000 at the Metropolitan Meeting; but said, ‘As, by residence at Arthington, I have become a Yorkshireman, to identify myself with you as one, I will give another £1,000 here.’

“Sunday, June 5th.—I preached in Eastbrook to one thousand five hundred children, on Samson’s first encounter. The children behaved well; and their singing moved me to tears.

“Tuesday, June 28th.—I preached this day in a cellar occupied by Widow Womersly. My text was, ‘Yea, come.’ It was a great pleasure to tell of Christ to a few poor people in such a lowly place. One advantage of this Circuit, over any that ever fell to my lot before, is the leisure afforded for visitation, and the frequent opportunity for such services.

“July 4th.—We met in Eastbrook to distribute such copies of the Holy Scripture as had been purchased by weekly pence of the scholars. Not less than seven hundred had been so bought. Suitable addresses were given. The meeting was both pleasant and profitable.”

About this time Mr. Collins was somewhat singularly called to aid and visit William Short, Irish labourer.

For two years the man had been slowly declining. Nourishment was needed. The surgeon ordered, but the poor fellow could not get it. A statement was sent in writing to the Priest: as he—perhaps, could not,—certainly did not, help, the doctor applied to Mr. Collins, and assured him that to have any chance of rallying the man must have porter daily. Him Mr. Collins directed to order from a neighbouring inn what as a physician he believed to be needed. Visiting the sufferer, Mr. Collins gave him a New Testament, and afterwards from time to time sought his good by prayers and counsels. Going one day, he stepped into the inn to discharge the debt, and, on coming out, a fact occurred, odd enough, yet of value as showing how wary good men need to be of seeming evil. Mr. Collins says, “A person touched his hat to me, and said, ‘I regret to see you come from such a place.’ I replied, ‘Inquire first and judge after.’ Ministers must, if faithful, often be on messages of mercy in homes of sin.’ One thing was queer in the matter; my forward monitor was himself far gone under the influence of drink. Having by explanation justified myself, I thought it right gently to *reprove him*. That done, I said further, ‘Come with me: I am going now to preach, only a few doors away, in the house of old Mr. Dobson, to whom since his hurt at Wood and Walker’s fire—he being unable to come for a sermon—I often carry one.’ The man accompanied me; sobered under the Word; and, when it was ended, went on with me to my Irish protégé, whose poverty so struck him with pity that he promised at once to send him a coat. So what had been my peril worked for his good.

“Tuesday, July 12th.—With all the Bradford Ministers I met Dr. Bunting at Mr. Walker’s, of Bowling Hall. After dinner, the evening being beautiful, I asked leave to retire awhile into the park, that I might see the sun set. The Doctor, who, with no approach to levity, had through the whole interview been full of geniality, threatened to test my love of such fair scenes by appending as a condition a promise that I would also *see it rise*.

“Wednesday, July 13th.—I went to the opening service of Richmond Terrace chapel. Dr. Bunting’s text was 1 John i. 9,—‘Confession, and its results.’ I truly

enjoyed the sermon. The Doctor's teaching is so scriptural; his views of things so clear; his manner so natural; his language so simple, just, and dignified; and his heart so evidently in harmony with the Word he preaches, that it is most improving to hear him.

"Friday, July 15th.—The Stationing Committee commenced its work.

"Sunday, July 17th.—Henry Davies preached most profitably from 'I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory.'

"Saturday, July 23rd.—At Eastbrook, Mrs. Barrowclough, a widow, laid two young women, her only daughters, in one grave. Both had died during the week. Her sad bereavement, and this so sorrowful a funeral, moved the whole neighbourhood.

"Sunday, July 24th.—Alfred Barrett preached a rich and spiritual discourse from John xiv. 15, 16.

"Wednesday, July 27th.—Conference opened. The Rev. John Lomas was, with great unanimity, elected President. The public prayer-meeting was a gracious season. Wonderful power accompanied the prayer of old Mr. Hickling, a remarkable old man: sent forth by John Wesley himself, he has continued in the work sixty-five years, and now, at eighty-eight, is hale and active. Through all our preliminary meetings a fine spirit has prevailed.

Wars and fightings now are o'er,  
And contradictions cease.

"Sunday, July 31st.—At Eastbrook, Dr. Dixon preached a noble sermon about 'the kingdom which cannot be moved.'

"Monday, August 8th.—A letter of resignation arrived from the Rev. George Steward. He declares himself a hater of faction; free from partizanship; and no way sympathising with either the men who have attacked the Conference, or their methods of doing it; yet he thinks that his views in relation to the pastoral office, and some other matters in discussion, are too much out of harmony with those of his brethren to allow him to remain silently, or, if not silently, pleasantly, among them.



“Dr. Beaumont gave a speech of commanding eloquence in favour of special consideration for Scotland.

“Tuesday, August 9th.—Daniel Walton’s adjudicatorship of the Mediationist Prize Essay was inquired into. Daniel Walton spoke with great frankness; affirmed love to Methodism, to his brethren, and to our discipline; said, had he foreseen how offensive this step would have been to his brethren, assuredly he would not have taken it; but that, being taken, going back would excite more odium against the Conference and do more mischief than going on could do. John Scott spoke plainly and well. ‘The Mediationists,’ said he, ‘say that Conference is wrong: they want to prove us so; offer £100 to any man who will do it; and ask Mr. Walton to decide for them which, of all who attempt, does it best. Would they have asked Thomas Jackson or John Hannah to have done that? Is that a place which any member of this Conference ought to accept?’”

Close attendance in Conference wrought so unfavourably upon Mr. Collins’s but half established health that he was compelled to set forth for change and rest.

A letter, dated York, August 18th, says, “I am better to-day. Mr. Snow had me out to the minster. Such artistic services are not easy either to understand, or to join in, or to be edified by. Brother Methley also was present. He took part vigorously as long as he could; but when choristers usurped the matter with solos, trios, quartetts, and the like, I observed that he took up his hat and hasted away. I infinitely prefer the quiet *worship* of an ordinary parish church to the *performances* in a cathedral.”

On his return Mr. Collins preached at Eastbrook from Jeremiah xiii. 27, and notes:—“I can only bless this people by getting inside their hearts by the preaching of holiness. Indeed, for years, I have felt, in every place, that my strength lay just there.”

“Friday, September 17th.—I took tea with brother Swindlehurst, and held after a *Scripture conversation* with him, his wife, and a few friends. Good will come of it.

“Sunday, September 19th.—I waited upon the Lord

early about my work. The Divine Three, the Ever-blessed One, heard me, and came unto me.

"Monday, September 20th.—I took Emmy and Maria to Westgate Hill, to Bramwell's grave. The spot where rest the remains of that man of prayer is truly lovely."

A letter to the Rev. James Harris, dated September 21st, 1853, furnishes information:—"Your Otley is a beautiful part of Yorkshire. I hope you will not get killed with kindness. On one of my visits, though I begged as for life to be excused, my well-meaning hostess, exuberantly hospitable, insisted upon my consuming such a Saturday supper as I could not overget for a day or two.

"I am better in health, and the Lord's presence has refreshed me of late. My great labour and aim is to awaken the Church. We shall arise. Feeling concerning heart holiness is growing: but the town is often full of interfering excitements, and has great press of business. Lately the inauguration of St. George's Hall for a time turned all attention towards music. As the Bishop of the diocese and the Archbishop of the province were both present at the oratorios, it was not easy to convince others that attendance could be questionable or unseemly: though a thing more lavish in expenditure or worldly in tone seldom occurs.

"Last Tuesday, having found Mrs. M—— at the renewal of tickets, though long a member, to be but misty in her experience, I called upon her. She said, 'O, had I known that it was the Minister's night, *I should have kept away.*' I found that she had been teasing herself with the experience of others, instead of looking simply to God, and to His Word. I endeavoured, I think successfully, to draw her attention from them to Gal. iii. 13, 14.

"We have had fever in the house. One of our servants had it badly, but was, we thought, recovered, when, lo! last evening its attack returned with such violence as to make her quite delirious.

"My poor father is very ill. Dropsy is set in. What a mercy that I am now so near Leeds! I go as often as I can.

“ Sunday, October 9th.—The Lord refreshed me early in my chamber. I was assured that He would work to-day. Accordingly seven at the prayer-meeting entered into liberty. Many are stirred up to seek after perfect love, and witnesses of the good Lord’s sanctifying power increase.

“ Since the tea, before mentioned, with brother Swindlehurst, I have, with good fruit, made it my business to go to tea on a Saturday with one or other of our artizan families. As on that day they leave their mills at two, they have leisure to receive a visit. I call it a ‘ Bible tea,’ in distinction from a ‘ gossip and twaddle’ tea. Those to whom I go invite two or three serious neighbours. The meal over, each opens a Bible, we read, and converse about what we read ; then one or two pray, and I come home. I find it a blessed mode of pastoral communication.

“ Tuesday, October 21st.—While I was in the waiting-room of the Apperley Bridge station, two gentlemen entered ; one took up a book from the mantel, but hastily put it down, saying, ‘ It is a Bible, I thought it had been a Directory.’ His friend replied, ‘ Indeed it is a Directory.’ ‘ Well,’ said he, ‘ you are right : so it is ; and a good one too.’ The approach of my train only left me one moment in which to remind, that practically the Directory would be valuable just to the extent to which it was followed.”

“ Thursday, October 27th.—I finished D’Aubigne’s ‘ Reformation in England.’ Unless he proceed further, the title is too wide for the performance. The Reformation here was scarcely out of its cradle at the downfall of Wolsey, with which he concludes. The book well teaches how the seed of the Reformation was sown in multiplied copies of the Word of God ; and how Providence—with small thanks due to the agent—made the wrath and power of Henry the Eighth serve Him.”

Three paragraphs of the journal now-about contain noteworthy reminiscences of eminent men :—

“ Heard the renowned Father Gavazzi. He gave no information beyond what was current ; nor did he speak at all of, what Methodists most like to hear, his conversion. His fame arises from, perhaps, unrivalled skill at

expressing passion in look and tone, and exhibiting thought in action and gesture."

"Heard the celebrated J. B. Gough in St. George's Hall. In earnestness he is a flame; in descriptive power, unparalleled. I never heard any other Temperance advocate deal with the question in its relation to Holy Scripture so discreetly. He showed that while the Bible nowhere condemns abstinence, it does plainly teach the giving up of a lawful enjoyment out of regard to our brother's benefit, to be a thing beautiful, expedient, and good; and that in that teaching lies the general principle of which philanthropic teetotalism is but a particular instance."

"Heard of the death of the learned and famous George Stanley Faber. His books have taught me much. When I was labouring in the City of Durham, he honoured me with several interviews. He was a most industrious man. His habit of early rising enabled him to be a voluminous writer. He was a profound scholar, and, what is far better, a very humble, devoted Christian. His end was delightful. Among his dying words were these:—'Jesus speaks peace, peace. He saith unto me, "It is I, be not afraid." Nor, indeed, though I shrink from the pain, have I the slightest dread of the result of death. I wish to bear my last testimony to the realness of the religion of Christ. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil." Why should I? "Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." Peace! Peace! Tell my friends I die in perfect peace!'"

In a letter Mr. Collins said to me:—"It pleased the Lord to release my father about five o'clock of the afternoon of Thursday, December 1st, 1853. On Monday I saw him; he was then weaker than ever; but I did not apprehend that I should see him no more alive. On that occasion his conception of the majesty, justice, and purity of God seemed to be overwhelming; and he spoke of himself with such humility and self-abhorrence as men often have when on the point of receiving some great blessing. Meditations on the eternity and immutability of Jesus, suggested by John viii. 57, 58, had been sweet to him. On leaving him I prayed, and

the door of access, as indeed in his chamber had ever been the case, seemed open wide.

"On Wednesday night he quoted as the Lord's word to him, '*This day* shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.' His death within twenty-four hours verified that he had heard aright his Master's message.

"His illness has lasted eighteen months. It has been a merciful visitation. Though it came on in a manner that precluded hope of recovery, yet it left him many intervals for communion with the Lord, and with his friends.

"On Friday, December 2nd, I went over to Leeds. Death had not marred my father's countenance; he looked as he lay like a saint at rest. On Tuesday, the 6th, the funeral took place. The Rev. J. H. James officiated. All the Town Missionaries of Leeds attended. As the body was borne from the door, the Missionaries sang,—

We know, by faith we know,  
If this vile house of clay,  
This tabernacle, sink below  
In ruinous decay,  
We have a house above,  
Not made with mortal hands;  
And firm, as our Redeemer's love,  
That heavenly fabric stands.

"When we reached the cemetery chapel, the General Superintendent delivered an address full of affection and respect. He instanced as memorable excellencies my father's loving harmony with fellow-workers, his kind-heartedness, his readiness in Holy Scripture, and his great success.

"It was by no means a day all dark to me. My mind was rather drawn up after the spirit of my father than down after his coffin. His glory won more of my thought than his grave.

"During the afternoon, which we spent together, the Missionaries rehearsed many instances of my father's singular zeal. One impressed me. A certain court in his District was entirely inhabited by fallen women. Every house in it was of ill fame. One being vacated, *my father took it*. It was situate at the very mouth of

the entry, so that none could be a visitor of that court without passing its door. Night after night, under his direction, religious services were held there. He kept vigil; and whenever such a woman as is described by Solomon, 'subtil of heart,' with the flattery of her lips and much fair speech had snared some foolish victim, and was bringing him to her den, my venerable father inevitably intercepted them, saying, 'Remove thy way from her. Come not nigh the door of her house, lest strangers be filled with thy wealth; and thou mourn at the last when thy flesh and thy body are consumed.' A few weeks of persistent witness so spoiled the evil trade that every home of shame was closed; and soon a decent tenantry, quite changing the character of the neighbourhood, filled up the place.

"How great Heaven's goodness to my father in these latter years! Ever since 1837, when he came to assist me in Orkney, Providence has opened his way to full employment in that work of the Lord which lay so near to his heart. During the eighteen months of illness he has been sweetly solaced by the assiduous care of medical attendants, the regard shown to him by many Christian friends, the kind attentions of his brother Missionaries, and the frequent visits which, now it was necessary, Providence, by placing me so near, enabled me to pay."

In regard of this venerable kinsman I may be permitted to add to Mr. Collins's notice a few supplementary words. After an almost unparalleled fight with despair the way of peace was made known to him in a sermon preached in a lone country cottage by the Rev. James Mole. The trembler entered just in time to hear the text, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." It set him free. Had that excellent man gathered no other gem for the crown of his Lord, this one would well have paid for every weary walk and Gospel word of his whole life. The new convert began at once to reprove, rebuke, and exhort. Bent on full consecration, he went over to Madeley to hear and speak with Mrs. Fletcher. It was a visit of which rich memories abode with him through life. She gave him written counsel; a copy of which I subjoin:—

MADELEY, *June 4th, 1808.*

DEAR BROTHER,

You have cause to praise the Lord for bringing you through fire and water into the wealthy place. If you now abide waiting upon God, you shall surely inherit that promise, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

The three heads on which you ask advice are important; viz., whether you ought to reprove sin wherever you see it? whether you may expect to do the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven? and, whether you are called to preach?

With regard to the first, you observe yourself that "your soul has been most happy when your tongue has been most faithful." No wonder. Such work is laid upon us by the command of God. He hath said, Lev. xix. 17, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him." It is therefore your duty in the meekness of wisdom so to warn sinners who in your sight or hearing break the law of God. Such kind and loving reproofs have brought many to repentance.

As to your second question, ask yourself, Would Jesus Christ have put that prayer into my mouth if it could not be granted? Hear for your encouragement His word, Heb. viii. 10. "This is the covenant that I will make; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts:" *i.e.*, He will take your will and affections; He will enable you to love Him with all your heart. Now, when all you do, or say, or entertain in your mind, springs from love, then all will be pleasant in His sight. Blunders and shortcomings will mix with all so long as you remain in the body. For these defects and errors you will feel, and delight in feeling,—

"Every moment, Lord, I need  
The merit of Thy death."

Love is the fulfilment of the law. Love is the element of heaven. This liberty of pure love is both gained and retained by faith, and by faith only; faith that cleaves every moment to the Saviour, from whom, from first to last, all our salvation flows.

You further seek light into the will of God concerning the duty of preaching. *This question it is not my place to answer.* In all church affairs we are to seek the guidance of those whom God hath made overseers and directors of the flock. With them, therefore, you will do well to consult.

But as a little help for the present, I advise that you wait on the Lord in much prayer, that He will in an abundant manner pour out His Holy Spirit upon you, and open all your way before you. That is a true word,—*"Where the Lord leads us, He lights us."*

Do all the good you can among the sick. Prayer-meetings will afford opportunity for you to give occasional words of exhortation. You cannot be wrong in gathering a few poor neighbours into a cottage to hear the Scriptures: such explanations and applications as you know their condition to require, might be given by any good

man without usurping anybody's function. Do each hour just the good that opens before you : doing so, you will find our Lord faithful to that saying :—" He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Praying that that light may abundantly be your portion,

I remain, your friend in the Lord,

MARY FLETCHER.

Obeying these wise directions he sought counsel of his Minister ; and a duly written credential still exists, signed James Bogey, authorizing " John Collins to exhort, and expound God's Word, in any of our Societies, so long as he shall continue to honour the Gospel of God our Saviour." Thenceforth he appeared upon the Plan. I may not further trace his path of toil and fruit ; but extracts of letters to me, dated 1841, will briefly exhibit him both as an earnest worker and a loving kinsman :—

" I have long desired to write to you, but such have been my engagements that I have scarcely found time for a line to my own children. You will not doubt this after reading a summary of my labours for the year :—

Visits in the order of my District .....	4,168
Occasional visits .....	958
Special visits to sick persons.....	795
Sermons preached .....	411
Tracts distributed .....	38,000
Number of persons conversed with.....	11,734
Neglectors induced to attend public worship ...	283

" I am glad to hear that you are on the Plan. So far my prayer is answered. I shall continue to pray that you may be very holy and very useful ; and that by your means many souls may be saved. Furnish yourself with thoughts, enrich yourself with words, and study how to put them in array."

My uncle was of the mind of that general who said, he would " rather fight a battle than write a bulletin ;" he proceeds :—

" The slowness of my pen, and the deficiency of my grammatical knowledge, cause report-making to be the most tedious part of all my labour. Let my lack be a lesson to you. Make yourself a good grammarian, and for another thing, take Walker's Dictionary in hand ;



read carefully down until you come to a word which you did not before understand ; then, write the definition of that in a book of your own ; read on until you have thus discovered five such words ; make the meaning of those five new words your own ; do the like every morning ; keep this rule twelve months, and you will thank me."

In answer to my objection that to flood my brain with such a deluge of hard words would be perilous, seeing that the hearers of my juvenile discourses, like enough with great justice, complained of my words being too big already, he shrewdly replied :—

"That fault—so prevalent with young preachers—comes oftener of penury than of wealth. Better scholars do not utter the first word they can, but select the very word they ought to say. To give you power to do the same, I urge upon you this way of increasing the stock of words from which you may pick. Such study, disciplining you to define and distinguish, besides being in itself good, will make every book you read easy, and the beauties of every choice piece of composition visible. Once master of copious stores, you will have power to be at once simple enough for the poor, accurate enough for the critic, and varied enough for the man of taste, so that the edification of none may be hindered."

"But whatever else you do, and above all else you do, cherish earnest faith. Realize the truths you preach. Be sure that hell fire is quite as hot,—the devil quite as cruel,—damnation quite as terrible,—and sinners quite as much in peril as the Bible says they are. Never doubt God's willingness to save,—to save at once,—and to save by you. Always preach remembering that for that very sermon you will have to answer at God's bar."

Who, after reading this, will wonder that I cannot even yet without emotion advert to the fine features of the character of Mr. Collins's father ? He stands before my eyes as he did when I was a very little boy. He was the first Christian whose character permanently fixed my attention, and called up within me any emulation of goodness. I can never forget the warm affection of his heart, the cheerfulness of his company, the ardent flame of his zeal, the incessant and self-sacrificing nature of his toil, the simplicity of his testifying for

Jesus, the all-venturing confidence of his faith, his tender compassion for perishing souls, his unmistakeable enjoyment of religious ordinances, and his love of God.

The shadow of bereavement did not yet pass from Mr. Collins's path. No grass grew on his father's grave before it was re-opened to admit his mother. In their deaths they were scarce divided. On Sunday, December 18th, Mr. Collins was at Leeds, to be present at the funeral sermon for his father, preached by the Rev. J. H. James. In the afternoon of that day he read to his mother Psalms xxxvi. and xxxvii. A perpetual cough left her little rest. Weary, but thankful, she said, "It is well that I have not my sins to bear too." Mr. Collins says :—"The next morning, in prayer before coming away, my tongue seemed held from asking my mother's life. My desire could find outlet only in asking for her "the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." And on the Wednesday following word reached me that from pain and all the troubles of this mortal state my dear mother had escaped away. Her departure was beautifully tranquil. Nearly the last thing she did was to repeat the Hundreth Psalm,—ever a favourite with her. Her cough compelled a pause at the words :—"O go your way into His gates with thanksgiving." She never finished the recitation, and was only able to add : 'His gates,—His gates.—Go into them ;—yes, I may, for they are open—wide open—to me ; and have been for some time.' And so, without another word, speedily and peacefully she passed those heavenly portals, which her faith had gazed upon.

"Saturday, December 24th.—I looked upon my mother for the last time, and then followed her remains to their final resting place. As she went down into the grave, the tones of her voice seemed to fall fresh upon my ear, in the well-remembered words, oft said as she dismissed me morning by morning to school :—"Make haste home, Thomas! Make haste home!" I well knew how to apply the words, *I shall be early home* ; but I have devoted myself afresh to God, and hope to do some little further good before I reach the endless rest."

Mr. Collins's excellence, laboriousness, general popularity, and usefulness in Bradford, none questioned ; yet

there, *for the first and last time in his life*, opposition was made to his stay in the Circuit. This arose from various causes. Just such, however, as ordinarily make respectable precisians antagonists of the revivalist type of men.

Sciolists, who read everything in *their review*, declared his range to be narrow. It was : narrow as Paul's determination ;—narrow as repentance, faith, and holiness ;—themes concerning which Dr. Dixon once said,—“Our fathers used to preach those things—and nothing else.” “But, Doctor,” interjected a young divine, “the times now need more latitude.” The reply was, “The times need? you mean the devil tempts you!” It is due to Mr. Collins to say, though, as to subject, he attempted no novelties, yet he often found the old truths in neglected texts; and that good judges invariably pronounced his treatment of them to be remarkable for strength and originality.

Nominal members, and professors with piety to seek, dreaded his probing questions and pressure for present decision. If sleep be better than safety, they were right. Take a specimen case that occurred in a Bradford class :—

“Have you peace with God?” “No, Sir.” “How long have you been among God's people?” “Fifteen years.” “Fifteen years! Ah, I see how it has been; *ding, dong, bell; ding, dong, bell.* Ordinances round and round, but no Divine conviction of sin; no tears at the Saviour's feet; no clasping of the Crucified; no agonizing resolve, ‘Lord, I will not let Thee go.’ How long is this inertness to last? Down on your knees, man.” Stung to earnestness by admonition so strong and faithful, the laggard of all those years knelt, and wept, and wrestled, and prevailed, and home he went that night a happy man.

A quaint writer has said, “If the fiend can but get the church turned into a weekly show-room of fashions, he would ring the bell himself rather than it should lack a congregation.” Lovers of gay attire felt astonished at the literality with which Mr. Collins held the baptismal vow to “renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world,” and were annoyed at having their cherished

fineries pelted with apostolic texts and half-forgotten Methodist Rules. An instance will most fairly exhibit what there was, be it excessive or not, of sternness in his fidelity; while it will also at the same time make one enduring record of its successful issue. At a quarterly visitation a young woman, notably tawdry, and garlanded with the painted rags commonly called flowers, seated herself just before him. As to him such bedizenment on a Methodist woman in a class-meeting was a great pain, he requested her to occupy a chair less conspicuous. The Leader's wife, though herself carefully plain, said, "Sir, you are too severe. Your rebuke of A. has greatly hurt my mind. God looks at the heart." Mr. Collins replied, "My sister, *God looks at everything*. What love should I show to Adelaide by not trying to make her better? And how should I look either God or Adelaide in the face at last, if I failed to declare unto her His whole counsel?" The next Lord's day Adelaide, neat enough to have met John Wesley's taste, rose in the lovefeast and told of the bitter tears that word had made her weep; yet publicly, before the Church, gave thanks for the admonition. She stated that *in her conscience she knew* that love of such things had really been to her soul a peril and a snare; that in obedience to her pastor's word she had gone home to her closet, and on her knees told the Lord,

All the *vain things* that charm me most,  
I'll sacrifice them to Thy blood:

and while doing so, bliss, abiding and sweeter than she had ever felt before, filled her spirit.

Occasionally, in the pulpit Mr. Collins offended itching ears; nor will I affirm that there never were sentences which might not grate on better ears. I hasten, however, to say, that no offence against the canons of strict good taste was ever brought about by buffoonery, —a thing which he held in deserved contempt: but, putting use before elegance, he allowed himself that freedom of illustration which, while edifying to the million, has always, whether in Luther or Latimer, Whitefield or Spurgeon, given horror to men of cold correctness.

Then, finally, his prayer-meetings were noisy. I must admit the fact. Perhaps not quite so noisy as the inquiry meeting at Pentecost, but certainly noisy enough to jar sensitive and unsympathetic nerves.

Citations from several letters will explain alike the course the opposition to Mr. Collins's remaining in Bradford took, and his wise, pure, peaceable, and exemplary conduct in face of it.

"On Saturday, January 14th, the Stewards informed me of their intention to invite a successor in my place. I could not but esteem this passing by of the claims of one who came to help them in an emergency, and had served them with much toil, as somewhat ungrateful. I wrote two days after, asking the reasons of their decision. To that letter no written reply was ever sent, and no verbal one given until about a fortnight before the Quarterly Meeting. I was then simply assured that they should not alter, and that resistance would be vain. This matter gave me much anguish. Many nights my sleep departed from me. The trouble was that my path of duty was not clear to me. I loved the people, and felt sure that the people loved me. What must I do? I went on the matter to my Heavenly Father again and again. On Saturday, March 25th, the Lord gave me light. I was conscious, as I have often been, of communion with the Triune God. My loving 'Abba' assured me of His help. Jesus, my Master, revealed Himself as that 'Man' who is a hiding place from the wind. I felt the gracious presence of 'the Comforter.' The thirty-seventh Psalm read sweetly. After that the twenty-seventh furnished faith with rich appropriations. 'The Lord is my light:' then I shall be guided. 'The Lord is my salvation:' then I shall be protected. 'One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after:'—then, that one thing given, care of other things may be dismissed. My way seemed plain. I resolved neither to resign my claim nor to strive for its realization, but just to let the Quarterly Meeting use its own judgment, and take its own course. I went to the meeting in calm assurance that the Lord would direct all matters that concerned me aright. The Stewards, as they had intimated, proposed a successor to fill my place. They

had no sooner so done than an amendment inviting me was moved. Many testimonies—pleasant, under the circumstances—were given. The issue was that my invitation to remain was carried by a large majority. Upon this I appealed to the minority to say whether they would work with me and with their brethren. No response was given. I then felt that, as one in humble fellowship with my great Master, as one who could do nothing but for the edification of the body, my work there was done. I could not stay to be a party man. I, therefore, sincerely thanked those who had desired my re-appointment, but declined to accept their kindness; and most heartily, as, indeed, knowing him, I conscientiously could, joined in the recommendation before given by the Stewards. I exhorted all to union, and besought those who loved me to vote for him. The name was put up again, and accepted with unanimity. I came home full of thankfulness, and rejoicing in God exceedingly. I had at once the satisfaction of not being rejected by my Circuit, and of having done something to promote peace and harmony, though I left it."

"Sunday, April 10th.—Preached at Dudley Hill John Patterson, a Leader there, informed me that he was first convinced of sin under the ministry of the well-known Evangelical clergyman, Carus Wilson. He said, 'About 1812, being then a farm servant, I used with my master and mistress, to attend Whittington church. In that church my heart has ached and my tears have flowed many a time. Scores were similarly affected. I needed further instruction, but could never muster courage to seek it. The restraints of the Lord's fear continued with me through years of rough navy work, but I never got peace until 1825, I found it in a Methodist class meeting.'"

The next day Mr. Collins preached at Prospect school, when an odd circumstance occurred. One Benjamin R., who a short time before, in a very remarkable manner, had been awakened to the peril of his sinful state, was there. His case was this: going to bed drunk, he was in the night awfully scared. Like enough it was a first attack of *delirium tremens*. Whatever theory may satisfy others, nothing could shake the belief of the

man himself that he, in very deed, had seen the devil. Alarmed by that vision, he broke his evil habits off at once, and seriously set himself to seek the Lord. On this night of service, a foundry man, black with the dust of his trade, came reeling in from a public-house. It was affecting to see poor Ben weep over that grimy drunkard. They recognised each other as old companions. "But, I say, Ben," said the sot, "did you really see the devil?" Ben affirmed, "I did." "O that I could see him!" cried he. "Ben, pray for me, that I may see him!" The poor wretch, thinking more of the power of fright than of faith, seemed certain that a glimpse of the devil, and nothing less, would insure his conversion.

"Tuesday, July 25th.—I preached out of doors at Broomfield. It was a wild congregation; still some attended to the Word.

"Sunday, July 30th.—I preached in Kirkgate in the open air. The congregation was large. With the Bradford poor many Germans and some Irish gathered. The play of facial muscle betrayed deep emotion in several. Some eyes were dewy, and the whole company gave earnest heed. To this day, outdoor preaching is the only way of meeting with a large portion of our population.

"Monday, July 31st.—My meditation this morning turned upon, 'They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.' How necessary for Ministers to be much with Jesus. Of those who are, friends and foes soon know it. How lack of other things is made up by that! How patient such are in suffering! how potent in work! Prodigies attend them. May I abide with Him,—

And nothing know beside,  
Nothing desire, nothing esteem,  
But Jesus crucified!

"Tuesday, August 1st.—Conference is considering the state of the work. May the good Spirit lead them to a sifting and thorough inquiry! We want the heart to condemn ourselves. The Lord would agree with us in that; would approve of such exercises; would accept

of them, and exalt us. Hitherto our tone has been too apologetic : we have found out explanations rather than made confessions. We must abase ourselves. We need the 'increase of God ;' and, at whatever cost, must get it.

"Tuesday, August 8th.—Solicitude for souls is our great want. All plans for revival fail where this animating spirit is wanting. The majority of our ministers and people are good, sincere Christians ; they wish well to the work of the Lord, but come short of solicitude.

"Many recent tractates have dealt with the polity of Methodism. When will some able man give us a good one upon its spirit ? Sacred sociality is the spirit, life, and leaven of genuine Methodism. Collegueship in the ministry, and class-meetings for the members, are its result. They are our strength : but the strength of them is love. Let love decline, and such a system must at once be felt to be a bondage and a fret."

The Bradford sphere of labour, as all before it have been, is affluent in instances, which may not be narrated at length, of Mr. Collins's ingenious, laborious philanthropy. I find him going to teach blind widows to read ; visiting and aiding friendless strangers ; turning out to reprove Sunday gamblers at their "pitch and toss ;" undertaking open-air campaigns for godless artizans ; preaching in a cellar, in a sick room, and in a milkman's kitchen, because, in the one case, lameness,—in the next, weakness,—and in the last, specialties of trade, kept back the various occupants from public worship.

A Bradford correspondent says:—"Thomas Collins was the most zealous Minister I ever knew. In an evening, I often had him at my door with the question, 'Can you sing to day ?' If I happened to be at liberty, away we went, singing along the street, to some spot before selected as suitable for a congregation : which reached, he would stop and offer up such a prayer as I never heard before from any other man. I have seen some of the most hardened wretches of Bradford weep under those prayers. Then followed an exhortation, plain, pointed, evangelical, mighty. Preaching ended,



he would next carry me off to some poor hovel, or cellar dwelling, where either sick sinners or suffering saints were lying. To such cases his acts of charity, very fresh in my memory, were frequent and costly. It was not uncommon to come straight from the house of sorrow to the nearest shop, and there at once order and pay for such articles as the necessities of the sufferers required."

It would be wrong to pass on to the next location without devout observance of the good Providence which, just when it was necessary, by the Bradford appointment, brought Mr. Collins, for the first time since 1831, into neighbourship with his parents. The solace his frequent visits gave to their declining days and final hours, cannot be told. In face of that manifest guiding by the heavenly Pillar to so opportune a coming to Bradford, I shrink from pronouncing that his leaving of it was premature. As I see him move off to his new field of labour, faith, looking higher than Stewards and Stationing Committee, compels me to say, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### SOWERBY BRIDGE.

BEFORE entering upon the duties of his new Circuit, Mr. Collins, with his family, paid a visit to Edmond Castle, the residence of Mrs. Collins's brother. From thence he sallied forth to a Sabbath service at Barrasford, one of the places in connexion with his first station in the Wark Mission. He was entertained by Mrs. Foster, of whom he writes :—" When I travelled there, she was an exemplary Christian ; and such I found her now. Her steady piety has received reward. Her husband has joined the Society ; one of her sons is a Local Preacher ; and all her children have grown up in the fear of God. On Saturday, at Gunnerton, I walked by the Tyne, and strolled among the crags, sweetly musing on the merciful ways of Providence toward me through all these years. With the Lord's day came many old friends to meet and to hear me. While glad to find fruit abiding from labours of my own early days, I also record with pleasure that three persons, Peter Waddell,—now a Local Preacher among the Primitives,—with Joseph Lowe and Joseph Walton, of Wark, informed me that they had been saved through ministrations of the Home Missionaries supported by Douglas of Cavers. On Monday I went to Wark. A local celebrity there presented me with a set of rhymes, at the same time informing me, with an impressive glance, "No man in the country, Sir, has written *more* poetry than I.' The quantity may merit praise : of the quality, as set forth by the sample, I cannot say much. I was, in my journey, delighted to find so many signs of progress. The roads are now good ; the farming is improved ; the houses are better, and the whole face of the country renewed."

During this visit a sprightly letter came from a beloved, and since deceased, colleague, the Rev. E. Brice. Mr. Collins had left him preparing for removal. The epistle says:—"Packing has quickened my ingenuity. I have turned carpenter; and, though, I fear, with some waste of timber, have made a box for my two easy chairs. Incipient triumph over my skilful achievement was, however, rudely dashed by memory of one of sarcastic South's most stinging remarks, viz., that 'many men go into pulpits, who would more fitly be employed in constructing them.' My lads, who have just come in from Shipley, desire love to you. They say they have been fishing: but what they have caught, *except a wetting*, I cannot find."

Mr. Collins was in his new Circuit betimes, and early entries show in what spirit his work began.

"Saturday, August 26th, 1854.—While waiting on the Lord, Psalm cxxi. came sweetly to my mind; specially the last verse, 'The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth, even for evermore.'

"Sunday, August 27th.—Preached this morning in Sowerby Bridge. The Lord certainly opened my mouth to describe full salvation from Gal. ii. 20. As I addressed the scholars in the afternoon, I was left free in the evening to hear my Superintendent, Samuel Allen. After sermon he met the Society. His communications and remarks concerning the Conference were most judicious and edifying.

"Monday, August 28th.—When renewing tickets, I was pleased by the words of an aged man, who said, 'Sir, I have double cause of gratitude to-night; first, because this ticket completes my fiftieth year of membership; and second, because my grandson, who bears my name, is here to be admitted on trial.'"

On Sunday, September 10th, Mr. Collins preached at Stainland. A correspondent, resident there, says, "It was a gracious season. In that service I was deeply convinced of the folly of living, as I had done, beneath the full standard of that inward holiness which is 'our calling's glorious hope.' I was stirred with a restless desire of perfect love."

“Wednesday, September 13th.—A profitable meeting for ministerial conversation was held at Keighley. David Hay spoke well of secret prayer in its relation to pulpit power. Samuel Tindall confessed and deplored the too common lack of that eminent holiness which alone can make Ministers vessels fit for the Master's use. Robert Spence Hardy testified to the good results of a rule which he and his colleague, Jacob Morton, had formed to themselves of reading the Scriptures together daily with prayer. Isaac Denison gave thanks for succours of grace given to his soul amid the continued trials of his agitated Circuit.

“Friday, September 22nd.—I am much moved to gratitude. My house is pleasant, the country beautiful, the friends cordial, my position quiet and secluded, the way for usefulness open. My coming is of the Lord. At Bradford, when my mind was in a conflict, I felt love; in the issue of that conflict I had joy; here I have peace, and all the sweet luxury of a quiet mind.

“Friday, October 27th.—This day I have communed with God. While meditating on Psalm xviii. 1. ‘I will love Thee, O Lord, *my strength*,’ I was enabled to contemplate my work here with comfort. I was drawn out to plead with my Heavenly Father for the progress of His Son's kingdom; for the increased purity of His people; and for peace upon earth. War still rages in the East. In the battle of the Alma, September 20th, 1854, poor Robert Graham Polhill, my wife's nephew, was among the slain.

“Friday, November 10th.—My most earnest prayer is,

Let the soul-converting power  
Thy Ministers attend.

This is the common need. I have spoken unto the Lord for an increase of the Spirit. My way is opening well among the sick and poor. Yesterday I read, and sang, and prayed in a poor creature's room; and while I did so, her children all around me were in tears. May the Lord move whole families at once! The reflection that I have now served the Lord in His ministry these three-and-twenty years is full of encouragement. Hitherto He has helped me. I know the covenant, so

often renewed, He will keep with me to the end. I have not long to stay upon earth. Through Him I can 'watch one hour.' I was lately deeply affected by reading in Mrs. Sherman's Life what were almost her last words. 'Exalt the Saviour,' said she to her husband. 'Extol Him. Make Him very high.' This is precisely what I purpose, by gracious help, to do. I will make much of Him. The words, 'Hallowed be Thy name,' seem graven on my mind. How deep their meaning! I resolve to trust more than ever the Spirit's work; seek more than ever the glory of Christ; and look more than ever for the descent of God in the assemblies of His people."

At the date we have now reached the land was burdened by the loss, and cost, and anxieties of war. Most of the churches were troubled by sadly numerous defections from vital truth. Methodism was slowly emerging from the long eclipse of its time of strife. Beneath that baleful shadow the sheep had been scattered, prayer hindered, and converting power fearfully diminished. For five successive years Wesleyan churches had been compelled to record decrease of numbers. The Pastoral Address, a most suitable and affecting one, said : —

We would humble ourselves in the dust before the holy Head of the Church, and acknowledge that we are unworthy to bear His banner and to extend His kingdom. But from that dust we would urge the cry, "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; Thou that dwellest between the Cherubims, shine forth! Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up Thy strength, and come, and save us. Turn us again, O God, and cause Thy face to shine; and we shall be saved."

In the year upon which you now enter, put away, we beseech you, all such little thoughts as merely making up numbers, or of sustaining respectably denominational position. Set your hearts upon seeing *all your neighbours* brought to Christ. Look for a converted world.

Children are daily committing their first conscious sin; youths, daily falling into their first outward act of vice; men, daily hearing, reading, learning their first lesson of infidelity; and thousands upon thousands daily, dying meet their God.

Whenever, therefore, a week passes in the Societies to which you respectively belong without conversions, cry aloud to God, for in that week Satan has gained ground. If your classes remain from week to week without new members, cry aloud to God. When at

your lovefeasts there are none new-born, telling in the warmth of first love what hath been done for their souls, cry aloud to God. A flock without lambs is tending to extinction. An army without recruits will soon fight its last battle. In old time "the Lord added to the Church daily." This was surely written for our learning. Our prayers should be most lowly and most reverential, but most importunate also; importunate as the prayers of men conscious that they are pleading for the life of uncounted souls.

By an appointment of the Conference the week beginning Sunday, January 14th, 1855, was given up to special religious services. Mr. Collins commenced them by—what he had never in his life done before—reading a sermon. It was a thoroughly outspoken homily against adornments in dress; a faithful echo of John Wesley's teaching. The discourse, which was afterwards published, is clear, strong, and original. The text was Gen. iii. 6; the title, "The Sin in the Garden a Type of Sin in the Church."

In the introduction Mr. Collins remarks, "Though sin takes grosser and fiercer forms of hostility to God in the world than it can do in the Church, it is yet sin in the Church, rather than the world's hostility to God, that hinders the salvation of mankind. God's plan of good for man includes the Church's co-operation. That something interferes to hinder the efficacious co-operation of the Church with its Divine Head is a fact generally admitted and complained of. What is it? Is it fewness of members? poverty? violence of outward opposition? No; for the Church is not few, nor extremely poor, nor generally persecuted; and when did the Church prosecute its work in the world with greater vigour and effect than when it was few, and poor, and persecuted? It is none of these things. It is sin. It is sin in those insidious forms which, while they change the mind's posture towards God, yet awaken no apprehension among men. It is sin after the pattern of sin in the garden: which by thoughtless persons in all ages has been spoken of as *a small thing*, though it separated man from God, and brought upon him the Divine displeasure, with all its dreadful consequences."

After this preface the preacher sets himself most vigorously to deal with that branch of worldly conformity which Holy Scripture designates "outward adorning."

As all his friends were not in every point at one with him, selected from much correspondence, I subjoin a condensed brieve of their exceptions and of his replies.

Objection 1.—“I mislike the title;—‘The Sin in the Garden a type.’ The *parallel* you have drawn is ingenious, but cautious theologians fear to pronounce any fact to be a divinely designed type, unless they can show New Testament endorsement of it as such.”

Answer.—“That rule is safe and true, nor have I infringed it. I use the word in a lower, lighter sense. To defend my usage, and to clear my meaning, I have inserted a reference to 1 Cor. x. 11: ‘All these things happened for ensamples,’ (Greek, *τύποι*, ‘types.’)”

Objection 2.—“Doddridge and others give a more elastic interpretation of these texts relating to dress.”

Answer.—“I know it. I dread *elastic* interpretations. Doddridge had little of the martyr about him. To so gentle a spirit it would not be easy to embrace views known to cross the inclinations and current practice of the mass of professing people. I prefer—and in such points you will find it safer—to follow Wesley and Benson.”

Objection 3.—“I cannot look upon clothes as ‘Satan’s flag:’ they are only so when made and worn after Satan’s mind. I cannot forget that *the first garments were given by mercy and made by God*. I therefore consider mine rather as memorials of that kindness of the Lord, than of the sin, and nakedness, and shame that preceded it.”

Answer.—“You miss my meaning. My controversy is not with dress, but with ornament in dress. My own words I stand to:—‘Parade of ornaments is a banner for the adversary.’ Admitting what you further say, I ask, Can there be a memento of mercy which will not at the same time be a reminder of the sin and misery it seeks to remedy? Your statement, though correct, leaves me at liberty to say:—

O never in *these veils of shame*,  
*Sad fruits of sin*, my glorying be!  
 Clothe with salvation through Thy name  
 My soul, and let me put on Thee!  
 Be living faith my costly dress,  
 And my best robe Thy righteousness.”

Objection 4.—“What do you say of Aaron’s robes, which were ‘for glory and beauty?’”

Answer.—“I remark, first: that the High Priest alone, of all Israel, might wear that splendid array. Second: nor he, except in his function before the Lord. Third: nothing was left to fashion, or taste, or choice. Finally: every broidery, vestment, and gem had evangelical meaning. Such specialties fence him and his attire quite off from the track of our argument.”

Objection 5.—“But Psalm xlv. depicts ‘the Bride, the Lamb’s wife,’ as grandly apparelled.”

Answer.—“It is inaccurate to say that that Scripture speaks of ‘the Bride, the Lamb’s wife.’ The same object, I grant, is contemplated, viz., the Church; but not from the same point of view. Messiah is not there revealed as the Lamb, but as the King: fitly, in such relation, the Church is set forth as a queen. The only inference touching our matter, which can be drawn from that Psalm, is one which I do not question, to wit, that queens on occasions of state may be gloriously arrayed in raiment of needlework, and stand clad in gold of Ophir. Against proprieties of regal state I make no war. Jesus, with no note of disapproval, says, ‘They which are gorgeously apparelled are in kings’ courts.’”

Objection 6.—“But the very letter of the precept which you so powerfully seek to enforce, while, indeed, it condemns all vain, extravagant, meretricious frippery, yet allows such adorning as is pure and seemly, as well by dress as by holy tempers:—‘I will that holy women *adorn themselves* in modest apparel.’”

Answer.—“I will the same. Neatness and simplicity are always elegant. But above all, I teach the prayer:—

Send down Thy likeness from above,  
And let *this my adorning* be;  
Clothe me with wisdom, patience, love,  
With lowliness and purity,  
Than gold and pearls more precious far,  
And brighter than the morning star.”

Objection 7.—“You do not seem sufficiently to allow for suitable denoting by dress of the different grades in the social scale. Position in society should no more be



left unmarked than sex. It is as sinfully proud for the lower classes to be aping their superiors, as it would be immodestly wicked for maidens to assume the garb of men. All things should be done decently, and in order. It is not decent to appear in too sordid, any more than in too costly, array. It tends to confusion for mistress and servant to be indistinguishable."

Answer.—"Without doubt, could I conscientiously confine myself to attacking vanity in cottages and kitchens, my course would be open, and the applause great. I think, however, that, except as authoritatively appointed insignia, abstinence from gems and jewellery is binding on every Christian. Neatness, inexpensiveness, and utility, should govern the choices of all ranks. General plainness would lead to no confusion. Many things, better than dress, make distinction between superiors and domestics. Vulgar wealth, whose only right to rank is balance at a banker's, needs finery to mark it; but cultured people, native to the air of good society, are not in such straits, and require no such label. I never heard that in Mrs. Fletcher's house the mistress was mistaken for the maid, though I have read with pleasure that in one twelvemonth she gave £120 to the poor, and spent less than £5 upon dress. Her plain attire was neither an error nor an oddness; it came from the working of those very principles, which made her so eminent for piety and spiritual power."

Many copies of Mr. Collins's faithful Tract for the Times were given away, and probably, through private influence, not a few were sold; but unsolicited buyers came not. An account from his publishers, covering three months, lies before me. Its sum total of sales reaches the magnificent amount of 4s. 11½d. I fear the throne of the great Diana of fashion was not much shaken by the good Methodist Preacher's missile.

A clear conscience is better than a book-selling success. Mr. Collins says, "I felt bound in spirit to write, and preach, and print that sermon. It cost me some pain, much thought, and more prayer; but it is, and will remain, my protest against a great and growing evil.

"Satan lays thick, in these times, his snares for young

feet. Tea-gardens, people's concerts, circuses, theatres, and such like things, invite our youth away to folly and sin. Nothing would bar the doors through which they wander half so well as early training to plainness of attire.

"It cuts my heart to see young mothers and Sunday school teachers tricked out in the very height of fashion. This evil so increases that guilt would have come upon me if I had refrained longer. Can we wonder that children with such nurture hanker after concerts, dances, and those worldly amusements in which such fineries are to the best advantage exhibited? Such things ever will prove to be ruinous snares, until we start our children on another track. Mr. Wesley told his people so; his early Preachers did the same. Well, I have now done what I can; my mind is relieved, and, whatever my fellow-servants think, I know that I have pleased my Master."

On Sunday, January 21st, 1855, at Waltham Street Chapel, Hull, occurred the sudden and singularly affecting demise of Dr. Beaumont. After, in the usual order of the service, announcing the 316th hymn, he gave the lines:—

Thee while the first archangel sings,  
He hides his face behind his wings.

\* Those majestic words were the great Preacher's last. He fell in the pulpit, and straightway expired. Without a conscious pang the pearly gates were passed. It was translation rather than death. His ears closed softly to the Church's hymn; and, lo, in a moment, glorious transition! his unfettered spirit thrilled with the anthems of heaven.

Where died he? On the couch of pining sickness,  
Body and mind alike enfeebled,—worn?  
No!—on the battle-field, with lightning quickness  
Forth went the mandate,—and his soul was borne  
Triumphantly to heaven! ere friend could mourn  
Or pray for fortitude to bear the blow.

The pulpit was his death-bed. Wreath the urn  
Not with sad cypress, as the sign of woe:  
Twine victor's laurel: conquer'd now is every foe.  
Glory to God on high! The conflict's ended:  
Life's warfare is accomplish'd. Whilst he view'd

The great archangel's homage, he ascended  
 And, in a moment, by the seraph stood:  
 Himself transform'd, rapt, radiant, deep imbued,  
 And purified by Love's effulgent rays;  
 Then mingling with the countless multitude,  
 He prostrate worshipp'd, and commenced such lays  
 As earth hath never heard in his Redeemer's praise.

No death this century has, in the eyes of Ministers, been at once so admonitory and sublime. Mr. Collins wrote:—"Dr. Beaumont was a wonderfully attractive and eloquent man. His work is done; *mine will be soon*. His brilliant gifts I do not covet; but daily ask—and in some degree receive—grace to live so near, and in such communion with the Lord, that every word of mine may bear with it His blessing to the hearts of men."

March 2nd the same year furnishes a diverse, but not less instructive, obituary. Then died Nicholas of Russia, the world's mightiest autocrat, the absolute lord of sixty millions of men. It is perilous to allow ourselves, one-sided and warped as we are, freedom to denounce a fallen foe as smitten of Heaven. Yet the eyes are dim which, at that antedated funeral cannot see inscribed on the imperial pall, "The wages of sin is death." Sebastopol was a concrete iniquity; its existence a crime. It was no defence. It stood where no enemy menaced. Its only use was as a robber's nest, from whence, with vantage, the spoiler might go forth to filch from neighbouring men their rights and liberties. Did Mary of England feel the name of lost Calais branded deep within her? As surely that beleaguered Crimean fortress was written upon the broken heart of the Czar. The great king fell consumed by barred ambition, that fevered blood and brain beyond endurance; worn by cares of monarchy too big for mortal; brought down by the crash of broken pride.

But yesterday the word of Cæsar might  
 Have stood against the world; now lies he there.

And nations in solemn inquest asking, over the proud tyrant, why he fell, could only give true verdict by accumulating unusual meaning in accustomed words, and saying, "Died by visitation of God."

Mr. Collins wrote :—" This Emperor had embroiled his country in war, and now, thus terribly, is called from amid the din of strife to give account. Europe breathes freer for his removal. His stubbornness would need no overtures. To the last coin and to the last man, he vowed resistance. May his successor prove to be, as is well hoped of him, a man of peace !"

Though returned to full work, and actually doing more than most, yet never again had Mr. Collins the inflagging vigour of his early years. Many sayings reveal his consciousness that his strength had been overborne. Thus he writes :—" I have not as much outgoing as formerly. I cannot bear it as I used to do. In strange beds, now, my rest gets broken. I begin to think that my time of active service will not be long ; his gives me no anxiety ; I leave it with the Lord."

In Sowerby Bridge, as elsewhere, every method of usefulness was essayed. I read of cottage services in which souls were saved ; of refreshing wayside talk during which believers' hearts burned with the Father's love ; of family prayer-meetings where, with wife and daughters, he pleaded for the scattered, yet beloved, nation of the Jews ; of visitations of the sick whose worn and furrowed faces, at his message, were beautified with the peace of God ; and of special band-meetings for seekers of holiness.

Early in the year a series of meetings were held at Ripponden. The weather was unpropitious ; the frost, biting ; and the school-room, with its stone floor, wretchedly chill. In a narrative of proceedings there, Mr. Collins, in his racy way, asks a friend, " Did you ever know a man saved when his toes were cold ?" Each night after a brief sermon he dismissed the shivering congregation, but took the earnest seekers to warmer quarters in Mrs. G.'s cottage, where not a few received good that will outlast the stars.

The diary of Wednesday, February 21st, tells of one of his profitable Social Bible Readings in the house of a member at King Cross. The theme was Gal. ii. 20 : ' I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live : yet not I, but Christ liveth in me : and the life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.' Mr. Collins

guided the meditations by conversational exposition, so managed that most, if not all, of the little company, either in the way of question, suggestion, or confirmation, were drawn to take part. The Lord was eminently present, and the record is, "We all saw the way of faith very clearly, and all, with much prayer, solemnly agreed to walk in it."

Though at the March Quarterly Meeting the classes showed an increase of numbers, yet finances, owing to depression of trade, were low. Such was the deficiency of income that Stewards declared it necessary to seek from the next Conference some junior man, who might be induced to fill their third place at a reduced stipend. This evil was averted by Mr. Collins's generous surrender of £20 from his own claim for the ensuing year. He says, "I like this Circuit. Our numbers are not equal to the easy sustaining of three families. However, there is heart and hope in the people. Most of them, at the renewal of tickets, bring their offering and lay it down in the old way. We are expecting the descent of the Spirit. I am unwilling to settle down into a quiet way, but I cannot sustain long wrestlings as once I could. The ear of the Circuit is open to the doctrine of the Cross, and the heart of it panting with good beat for holiness."

"March 30th.—Returning from the prayer-meeting, I heard some men speak profanely. To my rebuke one answered, 'Why, I said no bad words: every word I used is in the Bible.' I replied, 'This is in the Bible, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."' I added, 'While such language makes you guilty before God, it also lowers you in the eyes of men. To speak as if none might believe you without appeal to that awful name suggests but a mean opinion of your own trustworthiness.' 'You are right, Sir,' said one, and the rest stood abashed. May the Lord bless that feeble word!

"Saturday, October 14th.—I started for Coventry. At Normanton I took my ticket; but seated myself in the wrong carriage; and, before I learned my error, the express, by which I had been booked, rushed away. A

detention of four hours was the consequence. It was all well. The sun was bright and the air pure, so I took a sweet walk through the fields, and, as I went, besought the Lord to employ me again in the conversion of sinners. A comfortable assurance was given me that He would. I next dined at a clean and quiet inn; then rested well on the sofa; and, at length, after a refreshing cup of tea, moved off towards Birmingham. Just as I took my seat in the carriage, a nice, fresh-looking, elderly man of the middle class came in. Immediately after there entered another, farmer-like in dress, a wrinkled, rheumatic, old subject, with a stiff knee. They faced each other, and soon glided into talk. Rosy was a teetotaller, a vegetarian, and a hater of tobacco. Poor old Rheum, much younger in years, though not half so hale, stuck up for his indulgences. Freshcolour gave results of thirty years of abstinence, and assured his fellow-traveller, 'Do like me, and you will look and feel like me. But Stiffknee rejected such overtures, and maintained that, ill as he was, he should soon be worse if any one stopped his cloud and bottle comforts. The repartees and ins and outs of the conversation were very amusing.

"I arrived in Birmingham at thirty-five minutes past eight. From thence no train left for Coventry until ten minutes past twelve. As I knew that privacy would be difficult to secure the next day, I embraced the opportunity of those interval hours to busy myself in meditation, prayer, and acts of faith. For the most part I had the platform to myself; and as I solitarily paced it back and forth, I was much quickened and blessed in God. *The exhalations of that night came down in abundant showers next day.*

"On the Lord's day, comparing appearances with memories, I was pleasingly assured that Coventry improves. More shops were closed, more people going to places of worship, and strollers were neither so many nor so dirty as they used to be.

"On Tuesday I went over to Leamington, and spent an hour with good Lady Carnegie. Her look is little altered, but new and distressing excitements trouble her. She has almost constant confusing noises in the

head; but occasionally the sounds become words; words, as of people plotting against her life. The dialect is always Scotch. Though conscious that it is a delusion, yet she cannot always free herself from terror. I suspect some fright stamped itself upon the nervous system in early life, and is thus strangely repeating itself in her extreme and feeble age. Despite of this, I found her, as usual, full of gratitude; we had good talk, and were comforted together in prayer. She told me, with joy, of the restoration of the South Esk title and estates to her family by the reversal, in the present session of Parliament, of the Act of Attainder passed, upon the fifth Earl, a hundred and fifty years ago. More joyously still she assured me that her grandson, Lord South Esk, the inheritor of them, is a true Christian. She informed me that just recently he had given £500 to the London City Mission, besides permanently supporting a Missionary, who labours under the direction of his uncle, the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel.

“From Leamington I took a little tour among the scenes of my own child days. In the books of the church at Solihull, I found the register of my baptism:—‘July 29th, 1810. Thomas, son of John and Ann Collins.’ It was in a book of parchment, and looked clear and fresh of if written but yesterday. Under date of May 28th, 1812, I found record also of the burial of my grandfather Davis. The stick he used to shake at me, and ‘Saucebox,’ the name he used to call me, are my only reminiscences of him.

“The next morning I went to Knowle, where I had arranged to meet Uncle David, my father’s last surviving brother. I had to wait an hour at the station for the coming of his train. It was passed pleasantly in reading, ‘The Victory Won,’ an interesting narrative of the salvation of a sceptical physician. When uncle arrived, he and I *daddled* along a pretty narrow lane, called Packwood Gullet. Over against a cottage he stopped and said, ‘I used to know the man who lived here.’ We knocked. A tremulous voice answered us from above:—‘*Her’s* gone out, and locked me in.’ Uncle cried, ‘Is that Master William Pickerell?’ ‘Ay, it is: but I tell you *her’s* gone out and locked me in.’

At another word, however, the poor old man got up from his couch, opened the casement, and looked out at us. He soon learned who we were. In answer to my inquiry concerning his age, he said, 'I be eighty-five.' He knew my grandfather and grandmother very well. He and uncle had a world of 'Auld lang syne' talk; which being ended, I wrapped a coin in a tract, threw it in at his window, and we went on. We passed the Aylesbury estate, famous in our family as the subject of the life-long dream of our kinsman, Buttwell, who always believed himself to be its rightful lord. We visited the church, a desolate-looking place; and next, with far more interest, sought out and entered the little cot in-which Methodist Preachers first told our departed kindred the words of life. We finally went to the marlpits; and there, in the house on the site of the one in which I was born, I read John xiv. to my mother's sister and my father's brother. As I knelt between those near and aged relatives, my heart melted in prayer. Going forth from the cottage, I grew enthusiastic in sight of my native hills and ancient haunts; though, somehow, all things seemed smaller to me than in days of yore. I laid me down in grandfather's field; and, until uncle's wheezy cough awoke me, had a refreshing sleep. Those meadows are classic ground to me. There I first saw birds, fishes, butterflies, and snakes; there I first gathered bilberries, blackberries, strawberries, and nuts; there grew primroses, violets, and daffodils; the flowers that first drew my attention, and, in many a night since then, have re-appeared in a thousand pleasant dreams. While returning to the station with my uncle, we passed an old farmstead, of which he rehearsed a story that, with a dash of romance, well illustrates rural manners at the close of last century.

"B., once tenant there, lay nigh unto death. One of his labourers, named Hains, on his way home, called at an inn in Knowle, where sat, boasting amid his cups, the brother of the dying farmer. With loud oaths the heartless fellow declared, 'Our Harry is *booked*. The better for me; for, so soon as breath is out of him, I'll be there, turn out the woman and her brats, and take



everything for myself. Though few knew it, she was *never married* to him; and, ha, ha, ha! I am heir-at-law.' Disgusted by such dreadful selfishness, the poor man set off straight to Kembell, the doctor, and told him what he had overheard. They together drove right off to Solihull for Chattock the lawyer; and, reinforced by him, went on at once to the farmer. It was midnight when they arrived. The doctor went up to the sick-room alone. The patient was surprised by so late and unexpected a visit. The reason of it was explained, and questions put to find how matters really stood. The answer was, 'I and Mary did really go to church to be married, but we were somewhat behind time, and the impatient parson was gone: we said we could trust each other's word, and would neither wait another day, nor trouble the clergy any more. I have always treated her as my wife, and have put her in my will as my wife; I see my error, but what can I do? Before the lawyer could get here to alter my will I shall be gone.' 'All right about that,' said the doctor. 'I've got him downstairs.' The man of the pen was set to work at once. The will was new drawn; and the property fenced from the spoiler's hand long before the morning dawned."

One cause of grief Mr. Collins found in this excursion through familiar scenes. The places formerly preached in by Wesleyans have their witness in them now no more. He remarks, "It is sad to retreat from ground once occupied. Though scattered cottage services never pecuniarily pay for working, yet they pay spiritually. They are invaluable Mission training grounds. What are young men doing? In my early days we loved to go forth and keep the candle of the Lord burning in such places."

During the week following Sunday, April 22nd, special services were held at Greetland. On Monday and Tuesday Mr. Collins conducted them. He says:—

In the forenoon of Tuesday for two hours, in my chamber at Miss Stott's, I occupied myself in prayer. The notes of what passed in my communing are as follows:—"O my tender Father, save souls. By the love Thou hast to Thy dear Son, save souls. Give Him His dominion. Remember His humiliation to our nature." Here, after considering Luke vi. 12; John xii. 28; Luke xxii. 41-44; and John xix. 34, I pleaded, "Remember His days of labour; His nights of

prayer; His agonies in the garden; His death on Calvary; and save souls.

"*O my loving Saviour*, save souls. According to Thy prayer in John xvii., Thy Father hath glorified Thee. Thou didst ask Him to glorify Thee, that Thou mightest glorify Him. How, better than in saving souls, canst Thou do this? Thou sayest, in John xiv. 6, 'I am the Truth;' and in Rev. iii. 14 callest Thyself 'the Amen, the faithful and true Witness.' O my Master, these are Thy names. My soul rests in Thy verity. Thou only Son of the only true God, Thou wilt glorify Thy Father by bringing souls to know Him.

"*O sacred Spirit, Comforter*, save souls. Remember John xvi. 14. The Son of God looks to Thee to glorify Him. Holy men were moved by Thee to say that Thou shouldest be poured out upon all flesh. This Thy Word hath raised expectation in me. Come, O Spirit of truth. My faith relies on Thee. Thou wilt not disappoint my trust."

I was much strengthened by these thoughts, and pleas, and acts of faith. Sweet refreshment in these exercises came from the Beloved of my soul.

Saturday, May 5th.—I went over to Greetland in time to conduct the band-meeting. The next day I preached, morning and evening, at Stainland, and at Greetland in the evening. Eight young persons found peace with God. It was pleasant to join in the hearty hallelujahs of the congregation. In meeting a class that day, I admitted five upon trial.

Friday, June 15th.—I preached to an attentive congregation in the open air. I stood near Hannah Holdsworth's door, who is ill, *in order that she might hear*.

Sunday, June 17th.—Preached at Colne. Religious feeling has not leavened there as much as in Yorkshire. Boys were shamelessly at their games in the street on the Lord's day. Rude remarks, intended for chapel-goers' ears, were made as we passed in the street.

Sunday, July 1st.—A young man convinced of sin accompanied me home. At my door I offered my hand, and said, "Good night." "But" said he, "I must get this load off." I took him in, directed him to John i. 29, prayed with him, and he went away rejoicing.

The Conference of 1855 was held in Leeds, under the presidency of the Rev. Isaac Keeling. Mr. Collins remarks:—Eighteen years ago, at the same town, I was received into full Connexion. The devotions of the Conference have been eminently spiritual. Ex-President Farrar fulfilled his work admirably. In the sermon before the Conference, and in the charge to the newly ordained, his faithfulness gave me great satisfaction. The Conference was full of heart, honesty, and love.

"Friday, August 24th.—I was greatly comforted by reading with prayer Ephesians i. in the wood above Copley.

“Tuesday, September 11th.—The deputation at the Sowerby Bridge Bible Society Meeting told of a Clergyman who preached so admirably before the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London, that he was urged to publish the discourse. As he persistently declined to do so, a friend, who had heard it, privately asked him, ‘Why?’ He replied, ‘Well, I once heard the famous Robert Newton; he so impressed me that from memory I wrote it all down. That was it which you and the Corporation have so fallen in love with. It is the best sermon I have; but, you see, printing it would pillory me.’

“On Tuesday, September 18th, died Joseph Holmes, a good old Leader of Sowerby Bridge. His words at our recent lovefeast showed thoughts of approaching dissolution to be familiar with him. He gave a very solemn testimony, and spoke of doing it ‘*as a man does a job for the last time.*’ Speaking on Saturday evening in the band-meeting, he turned to George, his son, and with voice faltering with emotion, urged him to follow Christ fully and for ever. During the Lord’s day he appeared at public worship three times. He affectionately waited at the chapel door for the newly-arrived Minister, and blessed him. That night apoplexy seized him, and now he is gone. He was a ripe Christian, full of perfect love. His removal seemed sudden, but many facts show that the Lord—as in such cases He often does—had whispered him to be ready.

“Monday, September 24th.—Miss S., of Stainland, who, at her class yesterday, gave edifying information of the way in which, on Tuesday last, the Lord, in her closet, had opened to her the gates of perfect love, now told me of the severe harassment with which the enemy had disturbed her through the night, by suggesting that the experience she had confessed would soon subside, and she be left to public shame. I told her that the very trouble Satan made about what she had done, might assure her how little such filial acknowledgments of our Father’s gifts are to his mind; and I advised her practically to contradict and defy the tempter’s will by at once sitting down, and penning to her former Pastor—whose heart I knew it would rejoice—a full account of all the great things the Lord had done for her.

“Going home, I turned again into the wood above Copley, and waited upon God in meditations upon Jesus as Messiah, the anointed One. (John iii. 34.)

“Proceeding from that pleasant closet, I called upon a sick farmer. ‘Who,’ said he, ‘is more regular at church than I am? Why, three absences would set half the parish asking after my health.’ ‘Well, friend, church is a good place, and regular attendance is a good thing; but church and market agree in one point; more go to each than ever do business at them. Do you always profit at church?’ ‘Not always, perhaps; but church-going itself is something. My Clergyman says:—‘Neglectors of worship, like uncut rock in the delf, cannot be used; but worshippers, like quarried stones, lie ready at hand for the builder to give them a place in the wall.’ ‘Very good,’ said I, ‘and Christ, the great Master Builder, is willing to put you in place just now; but, mind, He Himself, and He alone, must be your foundation.’ ‘Of course,’ was the reply, ‘I know and believe all that.’ ‘A stone placed rests. Is your heart at *rest*? Does your faith make you happy?’ ‘Happy? No! I am not happy. No man on earth is happy,’ he responded. ‘Nay! there I must contradict you; so resting on Jesus, I am happy; and thousands of others are so too.’ ‘Well, I expect I shall get to heaven,’ he continued. ‘Not unless heaven first come to you,’ I replied. ‘Does your corn ripen in the barn, or on the ground? You, like it, must be ready here, if you would be happy there.’ And so with prayer I left him.”

To a Minister Mr. Collins wrote:—“I rejoice to hear of your night of prayer; and, still more, of the assurance, that by faith your soul has entered the cleft of the Rock. That is well. Now abide there. Before you obtain those special influences, by which—as you say—you are ‘set all right,’ you must have delivered yourself up to the Lord. Observe, that surrender must never be retracted. Such engagements are not mere temporary expedients by which to wriggle yourself out of a difficulty, but solemn, binding, everlasting covenants. As the God of Truth, He requires you to believe Him: as the indwelling Love, He will make you like Him. Believe His truth every moment:

so shall you every moment be filled with His love, and have His likeness. Among them that fear Him, bear witness in the plainest terms that you do so believe. Such testimonies encourage others, and bless ourselves."

"Sunday, October 7th.—I preached at Denby-Dale. The Superintendent and his wife are both my own children in the Lord. Three interesting young men, earnestly longing for sanctifying grace, came to me for advice. As they were true-hearted, it needed but little to set them upon the present exercise of faith. The following were the arguments used with each case:—

"First case. 'What did the Lamb of God come to do?' 'To take away the sins of the world.' 'Does the word "sin" mean "pollution" as well as "criminality?"' 'In my idea of it I certainly include both.' 'Think you that Jesus failed, or did His work by halves?' 'Nay, no fault can in my Saviour be. His work was done wholly, perfectly, gloriously. 'Well then, accept Him now. He is a complete, and perfect, and glorious Saviour. *Take Him as all that to thee.* Sing it:—

Though earth and hell the word gainsay,  
The Word of God can never fail;  
The Lamb shall take my sins away,  
'Tis certain, though impossible.  
The thing impossible shall be;  
All things are possible to me.'

"Second case.—'Is God in Christ your Father?' 'Yes.' 'Will your Father withhold any good thing?' 'He says that He will not.' 'Would it not be the best of all good things perfectly to love Him?' 'Indeed it would.' 'Believing His word, that "He will withhold no good thing," tell Him:—

My soul breaks out in strong desire  
The perfect bliss to prove;  
My longing heart is all on fire  
To be dissolved in love.

Then challenge His pledged fidelity to deny thee if it can.'

"Third case.—'Did Christ give Himself for you?' 'Yes.' 'Must not the love that gave the gift be equal to the gift?' 'Yes.' 'If then He gave Himself,—His whole self,—can that imply less than that

He loves you with all the force of His infinite being?' 'It cannot.' 'Is He changed? Does He love you at that rate still?' 'He does.' 'What, does He this moment love thee with all His boundless, burning heart?' 'Indeed He does.' 'And in return you offer Him half yours?' 'Nay.' 'Well, three parts?' 'Nay.' 'How much then?' 'All.' 'What?—are you sure?—all?' 'Yes, all.' 'Then hallelujah! you, man, and God are agreed at last. "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. Herein is our love made perfect." "The Son of God loved me, and gave Himself for me." That is enough. Look only at that. Begin not to say, "I am thus, or thus;" say only, "The Son of God loved me, and gives Himself for me." I take Him; in taking Him, love Him; in loving Him, give myself to Him. He gave Himself to the cross: He gave Himself to my heart. I accept Him now with all my heart, from this moment and for ever.'"

• Each of these three young men went away filled with exceeding joy.

In October of this year Mr. Collins made yet another evangelistic excursion among the much-loved haunts of his youth in Kent and Sussex. The rich autumnal scenery delighted, while the fine, pure air refreshed, him. He preached at Gaudhurst, Staplecross, St. Leonard's, Ticehurst, Brede, Northiam, and Winchelsea. The notes are many of sweet thoughts in quiet walks; of closet joys; of incidents of conversion; and of exultation over one and another entering into perfect love. On every hand he found his spiritual children rising into usefulness. While on this journey, he visited Mr. Polhill, the husband of one of Mrs. Collins's sisters, and received from him a gift of the works of an honoured ancestor, "Polhill, of Burwash;" a lay writer of divinity, too little known; strongly Calvinistic, but fuller of learning, logic, beauty, and evangelical savour, than most of his clerical contemporaries. Ambrose and Austin, Bernard, Anselm, and Bradwardine, seem to have been his chief masters. His books deserve place with those of the front rank in the seventeenth century.

"Monday, November 5th.—A tea-meeting was held, at which, as far as possible, we collected all the members of Society. Mr. Allen, from an old record, read out the names of all who were in class at the time the Circuit was formed. It was affecting to find out how few of them remain. Departed worthies were profitably recalled to memory, and, before we separated, a covenant of daily prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit was heartily entered into by the people.

"Monday, November 12th.—I was laid aside. Life's uncertainty was clearly manifested to me; but my humble joy, in anticipation of the home in heaven prepared for me, was so great that, though I wished and tried to express it, I found all words to be a failure.

"Friday, November 23rd.—While I waited upon the Lord, His presence was a comfort to me. I meditated on all the way the Lord had brought me, and was glad.

"Thursday, January 3rd, 1856.—Miss H. sought counsel concerning the way into perfect love. Thoroughly sincere, she but needed help to the exercises of faith. I asked her, 'Is this record true, "God hath given unto us eternal life?"' 'Yes.' 'If in that glory be given, does not that imply that in Him there must be also grace to make us meet for glory? that, in fact, pardon, holiness, and heaven, are all included in that one phrase, "Eternal life?"' 'I believe so.' 'Then, my sister, take Christ as God offers Him; take Him now; take Him wholly. That saying is evangelical, "Not a bone shall be broken." God offers thee a whole Christ; think not of dividing Him. By Divine gift He is thine; by faith call Him thine, and straightway thou wilt find Him thine; the Cancellor of thy sin; the sanctifying Indweller of thy heart.'"

On Sunday, February 3rd, Mr. Collins re-opened the chapel at Matlock Bridge, in Derbyshire. While there, a lady, in answer to his inquiries about her soul, said, "It is painful to me to talk of my feelings; but, Sir, in this volume, poetry of my own composition, you will find my sentiments." Mr. Collins thanked her, glanced over its contents, and then said, "But, Madam, here are no songs in praise of the Redeemer." "I confess that subject has never yet been the theme of my verse."

‘Then, lady, whatever praise I may give your skill, I must complain of your ingratitude. Your harp will deserve breaking, if its chords be silent another week in honour of Him who bought you with His blood.’ The poetess confessed her fault with tears, and promised amendment.

To children in many a home Mr. Collins was a messenger of salvation. The following is a touching and characteristic narrative:—“Little B., the son of my host, had, I found on my arrival, been for some days under his parents’ heavy displeasure. On Monday he fell again into error. Thought of my own boyish folly and obstinacy awoke in me strong feeling for the child. *I retired to my room and prayed for him.* After which I asked of his father permission to visit him in the chamber where, as a punishment, he was lying in bed. That granted, I went and laid before the lad his sin; but, also, let him know of the pain I felt on his account; I told him that it was a grief to me not to have his company either in the house or in such walks as I meditated; and that, if he persisted in sin, it would not only separate him from his friends now, but also from God Himself at last. The boy wept much, and begged of me to call in his parents, that at once he might make his submission to them. My mediation was gladly accepted by them; and so the little fellow was restored. Some hours after, when none could see him, the poor boy took opportunity to steal my hand, and quietly press it with his lips. I felt his meaning, and it moved my heart much. There rose within me memory of the woman who came behind the Lord and wept upon His feet.”

Early this year the first English Edition of Mrs. Palmer’s “Way of Holiness” was published. To it a neat, brief, excellent Introduction was prefixed by Mr. Collins. The book, simple and artless, with a strong life-throb of piety in it, won his regard. Results justified his estimate; for few treatises have urged more people to entire consecration, or helped more to the immediate exercise of faith.

About this time gracious visitations cheered the Methodist Societies all along the Vale of Todmorden. Many precious narratives reached Mr. Collins’s ears, and



in more than one service he saw marvellous things. After a visit there he writes:—"The people sang so harmoniously, prayed so heartily, and believed so readily, that it did my heart good to be among them. Nothing refreshes me like the scent of a revival when the balmy buds of spring are opening in the Church."

On Friday, March 7th, Mr. Collins preached at Mirfield. Of this service a correspondent has furnished me an account:—"I accompanied him. The young man who drove us said, 'Sir, you must give us a variety to-night, for all sorts of people will be there.' 'You wish,' was the quiet reply, 'a portion of meat to be given to each in due season.' 'Just so.' Mr. Collins not being well, I took the preliminary parts of the service. Those ended, he entered the pulpit, and preached with wonderful power from Eph. v. 18: 'Be ye filled with the Spirit.' Great grace rested upon the people. Attention was rivetted. Tears flowed fast. Prayers, half thought, half uttered, breathed around. The whole congregation seemed athirst for the blessed fulness of which he spake. Never, before or since, have I seen an assembly so divinely moved. At the close of the sermon the Communion place was crowded with seekers. Several who received good were of respectable families in Dewsbury. Mr. Collins was glad exceedingly. His face shone with heavenly joy to see, in these young men, education, talent, and rich promise won over to the Lord's side. Triumph after triumph delayed us until a late hour. The young man who had driven us was kneeling among the seekers. Mr. Collins spoke to him. I overheard the conversation. 'Well, young friend, what have you set your heart upon obtaining? this fulness of the Spirit? Are you a pardoned man, an accepted child of God?' 'Yes.' 'Now, listen to me. Set carefully before the eye of your faith the blessed Saviour, as He hung upon the cross. Do you see Him?' 'Yes.' 'Those hands and feet; that thorn-crowned brow and pierced side?,' 'Yes.' 'That Saviour who suffered thus for you hath the Spirit—offers the Spirit—gives the Spirit. Can you believe in Him—the overflowing fountain—as giving the Spirit now unto you?' The young man was silent. "Whatsoever ye desire, when ye pray, be-

ieve that ye receive, and ye shall have." Do you so believe?" "No." "What! not believe Him who is "the Truth?"—not believe Him who bought and besought the pardon you say you enjoy?—not believe Him in whom, at the price of His streaming blood, this fulness of the Spirit is, and all for you?" With many such words he strove to awake the young man's faith; at length, meeting no response, he said, 'That unbelief within keeps every blessing out. If the like were in all, this gracious revival would stop. I must pass from you to the next. God will not alter His terms. He will be trusted; and, while you will not trust Him, I have no more to say.' In a short time the young man rose, took his hat, and left the chapel. As we came home, Mr. Collins said, 'You fear for that young men. It is a false alarm. *I should not, however, so have left a seeking penitent.* The cases vary. He, a child, though with no progressive faith, would be obliged to talk that matter over in his first interview with his Father. You remember, he desired "each to have a suitable portion;" he has received his; it tasted bitter, but it will prove medicinal. You will find that he only went away to seek a quiet place to weep and shake off unbelief in. The Church will hear of him again.'"

On Whit Monday, May 12th, the foundation-stone of a new town hall for Sowerby Bridge was laid by Major Edwardes. After the ceremony was a banquet. Knowing that the Clergy and Dissenting Ministers would be there, Mr. Collins, with his Superintendent, went, being invited by the rulers of their town. Civic festivities, as at present conducted, are not often congenial scenes for earnest divines. Mr. Collins says, "on the following Lord's day morning, I felt obliged to deliver my testimony against the method of proceeding. The object I commended. The town needed this larger room. But the bacchanalian mode of conducting the meeting must, when judged by Christian principles, be pronounced altogether reprehensible. None of the sentiments introduced were bad in themselves, many of them were laudable; but what reason can there be for filling glasses and drinking wine at the introduction of every new topic? This method should be banished from all Christian circles.

It is altogether a senseless, evil custom. I left early, but I am informed that nearly twenty toasts were drunk. Surely the devil invented this fashion. It cannot but be perilous to sobriety and good morals.

"Thursday, May 22nd.—A gentleman informed me how a sermon of mine, respecting Balaam and the drawn sword, when I was in Bradford, was used by the Lord for his good. He was, until he heard it, fond of gaiety and mighty to mingle strong drinks; but from that hour until he turned to the Lord, the drawn sword scared him in all his ways. He is now a happy and useful Christian. Blessed be God!"

On Tuesday, June 17th, a letter from St. Austell gladdened Mr. Collins by information of an extraordinary revival then in progress. Five hundred had been admitted upon trial during the quarter.

In July Mr. Collins set forth upon a long projected tour to revisit the scenes of his early labours in the far north. I will give his interesting Journal:—

"July 7th.—I left York at six P.M. by the third class. My companions were very civil, and received tracts with thanks. After a while a boy on his mother's knee threatened noisy nuisance; but a navvy undertook the matter, and soon found, if not a good, yet an effectual way of abating it. Taking out a large pocket knife, he said, 'Youngster, *I likes* children when they behave; but, look ye, *this is what I cuts their heads off with when they won't be quiet.*' This piece of oratory, delivered with face and action all to match, settled the business at once: we heard no more.

"Between Darlington and Durham three handcuffed men, accompanied by a policeman, entered the compartment and sat by my side. I fell into conversation with the one nearest to me. He was going to Durham gaol for a week for trespassing. I suggested to him that when that week was over it would be well so to conduct himself that such attendants in livery as now accompanied him might never be needed more. He intimated that such was his intention. He came from Thornley colliery, and had been a Sunday scholar. I advised him upon his return to seek counsel of a good Leader there, whose address I gave him. He seemed af-

fect by the verse upon the back of the tract I gave him :—

O Thou that wouldst not have  
One wretched sinner die ;  
Who diedst Thyself, my soul to save  
From endless misery !

“July 8th.—Standing on the quay at Berwick-on-Tweed I was pleased to overhear some persons talking religiously together. Haliburton and the Haldanes were mentioned: Dr. Duff’s recent magnificent Missionary speech, Dr. Gordon’s Life, and other such topics arose. At last, one of them brought up the ninth chapter of the Romans. ‘That is a grand chapter,’ said he. ‘Nae doot, nae doot,’ was the canny reply of the other, who seemed determined to steer clear of controversy, ‘and so is the eighth, where Paul says, “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.”’ He then strongly uttered his belief in Christ’s willingness to save all, and made my heart warm to him by capping his sentiment with those Wesleyan words :—

Witness that streaming blood.

“About half-past one I started for Edinburgh. The route gives frequent sea views. The country is fine, and the crops were abundant. A man entered at one of the stations, and sat by me. The guard put in his head, and bade us beware of our company. Soon after we were again in motion, the reason of the warning became apparent. My neighbour was a card sharper, nor was it long before his tools were in hand. He asked me to play. To my answer, that I did not know how, he replied by proffering to teach me. My response, that I had no wish to learn, displeased him. He tried the company round, but failed to find a dupe. I rubbed my eyes, for I had been somewhat sleepy, and said, ‘Sir, will no gentleman take your cards? Now I will try, and I will venture a guess that no one will refuse mine.’ So saying, I drew out my packet of tracts; each—including, at his own request, the poor fellow himself—took one. As he could do nothing in his own line, he really read it; and, at parting, in a whisper said, ‘Pray for me.’ Who knows the struggles passing in that soul?

“At night I preached at Leith for Mr. Hardy. At the

close some ladies from Skipton, and also some of the town, who remembered my preaching there eighteen years before, came to speak with me.

“July 9th.—At half past six, I took the train for Stirling. My only companion was a person infatuated by love of litigation. A female relative dying had, much to his disgust, left the bulk of her property to the Bible Society, the Missionary Society, and the Kirk. In two attempts to upset the will he had been nonsuited, but now, poor man, deluded by lawyers, with grand expectations of success, was going in for a third.

“At Stirling, I made my way to the celebrated Tract Store. A large place, long and high. Mr. Drummond’s original business was that of a seedsman, but the tract department has so grown as to absorb all his time; his partners, therefore, now, attend to the earthly, while he gives himself entirely to the evangelical seed. He employs an editor permanently. I observed that his desk was quite covered over with letters. He is a tall, dignified, fine-looking man; well beseeeming his position as an elder of the Kirk.

“At half-past one I left Stirling. At the Bridge of Allan many courtly-looking people were about. The beauties of the place attract tourists and visitors. A fine old ruined abbey is in sight. In the evening I preached in Perth about ‘the man with the withered hand.’ There was great attention, and some emotion. The Rev. Jabez Palmer concluded with a very earnest prayer. At the close of the service one said, ‘O, had we known, all the children of the school should have been here!’ I reminded him that my coming had been published on the Sabbath. ‘Yes, yes, we knew that you would preach, but we did not know *how* you would preach. You have blessed all the men; and God helped you to do it so simply, that you would have instructed all the children, if only they had been there.’

“July 10th.—I left Perth at six o’clock A.M. Two cheery ancients sat in the train, talking as fast as their tongues could go. As I wanted to get in a word with them, I remarked, ‘What a very fine morning!’ ‘Verra, verro.’ ‘Years ago, at a service in Orkney, we sang a paraphrase beginning,—

Blest morning ! whose first dawning ray  
Beheld the Son of God ;—

Could you recal for me the conclusion of that verse ?' Both old men moved their lips in quick repetition of the lines I gave, but with no token of bringing up the lines I wanted. I suggested, and with it they concurred, that what we did remember, fragmental though it was, uttered a thought both true and precious ; that any day is blest in which a man beholds his Saviour. They became communicative to me of local lore. We passed many objects of interest,—Guthrie, Farnel Manse and Kirk, Kinnaird Castle, and the gravel-bedded Esk."

At Aberdeen in the evening Mr. Collins preached. In that city he met with a singularly vain man ; good-looking,—very aware of the fact. Photographs of his precious self, taken from all points of the compass, adorned his room. He informed Mr. Collins, with *gusto*, how a fashionable tailor, *touting*, not for a job of clothes-making, but for a study of human proportions, pursued him with a request that he might be permitted to measure him. "Allow me, Sir," said he ; "that back would be of advantage to me." I owe it to the good nature of the rattle-pate to observe that his thoughts were not all selfish ; he gave sundry, perhaps valuable, directions for the general bettering of my kinsman's shape ; but in particular instructed him that the largeness of his face might be easily corrected by wearing a collar well up.

On Friday, seeing two churches under one roof, Mr. Collins turned aside to look at them. A sexton was there, of whom he inquired if he enjoyed religion. The man answered in some commonplace *rigmarole* about having to labour ; but was brought up with the question, "Is it not part of the law of God, Six days shalt thou labour?" "Yes." "Will obeying the law of God keep you from loving God? Do you not see that in giving labour as the reason of your not enjoying religion, you have really thrown the fault on Him whose providence made it necessary, and whose Word enjoined it?"

The Kirkyard stones furnished intances of how in

this world big first impressions often shrivel under close inspections.

ABERNETHY had record as a shoemaker. JAMES WATT, cut deep and large upon a splendid slab, evoked thought of the world-famed engineer: the disappointing conclusion in smaller letters was, "Flesher, of this town." Mr. Collins's industrious research was more than repaid for any odd matings of noble names by finding the memorial of Professor Kidd, whose excellent sermons, singular volume on the Trinity, and very valuable Treatise on the Eternal Sonship, had long been known and, for their great ability, admired by him.

At five o'clock Mr. Collins took steamer for Wick. In conversation on board, a shrewd sea-goer said, "I don't doubt Providence, Sir, but I don't believe my clergyman, who says that, because of it, a man is as safe at sea as ashore." King William's celebrated fatalistic aphorism, "Every bullet has its billet," no doubt strengthened his nerves in many a day of fight, but would not prevail with many to think it good for their health to take exercise along the front of battle.

The passengers had good store of chaplains; for, beside Daniel Farquhar, Mr. Collins's companion, there was a Baptist Minister, and two divines of the Kirk. It is noted, "We had devout talk; and in the evening read the Word of the Lord with prayer. When bedtime came, so crowded was the little steamer, that the floor had to come in aid of sofas and berths." Tossed by that unquiet sea, in midnight Mr. Collins found rueful necessity of rising. As the light was dim, and his step unsteady, some of the sleepers, in that cabin carpetted with men, learned his weight. He says, "I nearly set my foot on the face of one." On deck, revived by the fresh sea air, he remained until with dawn the well-remembered hills of Caithness came in sight, and the boat lay safely anchored in the bay of Wick.

Mr. Collins says:—"Sandy Henderson, Hector Sutherland, and John M'Pherson met us. They told me that of my old flock some have gone to the Kirk, some to the Free, and some to the Morisonians; but that all their hearts are warm towards Methodism still, and that they long for us back again.

“On Lord’s day, July 13th, I preached at the Temperance Hall morning and evening. D. Farquhar took the afternoon. The congregations were good. Many friends of *auld lang syne* gathered round. I noticed Betty Bremner, the blind woman; Malcolm, to whom I gave my horse; Connop, the Italian; James Good, James Ware, with many others; and among them an aged acquaintance, ever memorable for the courteous raising of his hat to my wife, a refinement of which, during our time in Wick, he had a monopoly.

“The town is greatly grown. There are many good buildings, new roads, and new places of worship. Our house, by itself of yore, is now one in the regular line of a street. Fish-stores and fishermen abound. Washer-women are plentiful. Old men are abroad with their sticks, and barefooted children romp in all directions. Wick is wonderfully larger, busier, livelier than it was. I preached on the evenings of Tuesday and Wednesday in the Established Kirk, Argyle Square.

“Wednesday, July 16th.—I went to Skarfskerry. I cannot say much for my equipage; for, to Huna, the half-way house, my vehicle was a dog-cart; from thence to Skarfskerry, a dung-cart. I passed a place where a bawbee-loving Scot once included in the charge of his bill, so much for my barley cake; so much for care of my horse; and so much *for hearing me preach*. Fierce wind and rain compelled me to leave my ill-flavoured chariot, and shelter with a roadside blacksmith. The wife knew me at once. Her name was Begg,—a very proper designation of many of my old acquaintances at Wick;—but this good woman, with her pauper name, had a princely spirit. I was sheltered for three hours in that stress of weather, and generously entertained; yet not one farthing would she accept, and only with importunity allowed her child to receive a gift. The rain had not ceased; but as there seemed no hope that it would cease, at six o’clock, with desperate courage, I betook myself to the cart again, and faced the storm. Twice my hat blew off; twice, as the lumbering thing without springs jolted over the rough road, the seat gave way; at length, with aching limbs, but thankful for whole bones, I reached the comfortable home of Edward Lyell.”



Mr. Collins preached four times ; and when he saw how even women came in, walking ten miles to hear the Word, it awoke all his former regrets of the abandonment of our Mission there. He mentions Edward Lyell, a Methodist staunch and true as any we have in England, who, though so forsaken, neither abated his Methodist testimony nor his Methodist work ; but kept on his class, nor did he cease until declining years, broken health, and failing strength compelled him.

Sandy Forsyth, one of Mr. Collins's children in the Lord, is also affectionately named. During the last past winter, a dancing master had somehow got the school-house of May to teach his jigs in. To the worthy ex-Methodist, such capering seemed no fit use of an ecclesiastical edifice ; so he brought the matter before the Minister. The clerical reply was, "As I pay the Professor to teach my own children, I can have no regret that he is teaching other people's." This sounded strangely to Sandy, who, years ago, at his Saviour's feet, had given up whiskey, reel, and strathspey, all together. To him, a ball in the schoolroom suggested a farce in the church, and the world in the heart : he, therefore, moved the parish ; and a protest of householders, by his means, was so numerously signed that the man of legs had to get him gone. Poor Sandy, with no Wesleyan Minister nearer than Inverness, is obliged to sit, with such respect as he may, beneath the pulpit of a pastor whom his conscience thus compelled him to oppose.

One of the pleasures Mr. Collins enjoyed in this trip was to seek again those lonely caves, those haunts of prayer, those Bethels on the shore, where in bygone days the Lord had met him. He says, "Formerly God came *strangely* nigh unto me in those places, giving me a mysterious, ineffable, awful, yet happy, consciousness of His presence. That *specialty of manifestation* He gives not now, but He enables me to exercise unwavering faith.

"July 22nd.—Dunbeath, twenty-one miles towards home ! I came hither to day in a gig. The fresh Highland breezes have been very agreeable after the fishy smells of Wick. As it was Wick Fair, numbers

were resorting hither as we were coming away. I gave tracts among them plentifully. Finery has come north. Bare feet and rainbow headgear seemed in odd contrast. At Dunbeath, I found a quiet grassy place overlooking the sea. The calm was delicious. There, for an hour, I had happy communion with God. He impressed my soul with a clear idea of Him as my all-sufficient Good. He showed me how, moment by moment, my being depended upon Him. I renewed my dedication to Him, and was sweetly strengthened to take Him there and then as the strength of my failing mortal life, and my portion for ever. The blessing of that hour abides.

"July 23rd.—I mounted the coach at half-past five. The cloud-capped hills threatened rain. The vapours, however, melted away before the morning sun; and such scenery opened before us as I had never before beheld. Berrydale, Helmsdale, the Ord of Caithness, Golspie, Dunrobin Castle, Dornoch, Tain, Invergordon, and Cromarty, each offered beauties of their own. My companions were intelligent and agreeable. Altogether the day passed so delightfully, that when I reached Inverness, I was so tired and yet so pleased that I scarce knew whether to wish for bed or for a longer journey.

"July 24th.—Choosing the route of the Caledonian Canal, I went at five A.M. on board the 'Cygnet' steamer. The voyage through the lakes, by the forts, and among the mountains, was incomparable. I noticed that Ben Nevis still had snow here and there around his noble head."

At Glasgow Mr. Collins cheered with a visit the nurse of his first-born. At Dumfries he soothed the soul of a weeper, by reciting and explaining the parable of the Prodigal. At Lancaster he found himself companion to an honest Yorkshire serving man; who, yearning for Methodist ministry and means, had bid Scotland good-bye. The poor fellow, little to his own comfort, had been exiled to take care of some great person's shooting lodge. To him the land seemed spiritually barren, as the heaths and mosses that furnished his master's sport. "Sir," said he, "*a man's soul wants something besides wages.*"

Strangely bronzed by sun, and sea, and wind, but invigorated and safe, Mr. Collins ended his tour by arrival at home, on Saturday, July 26th.

"Monday, August 4th.—I preached out of doors in David Boocock's yard.

"Tuesday, August 5th.—I preached at the front of Millbank chapel.

"Sunday, August 10th.—A young soldier, son of one of our people, offered public thanks for deliverance from the many imminent perils of the Crimean war. He had been under fire at the Alma, Balaclava, Inkermann, and Tchernaya fights. He was one of the survivors of the famous 'six hundred.' In that celebrated charge he and his next comrade alike had their horses killed; both, crushed by their dead steeds, lay unable to help themselves; an officer, worthy of his rank, bravely stayed amidst a tempest of shot to extricate them; that done, he caused them to hold on by his stirrups, one on each side, and so ran them safely in to the British lines.

"Sunday, November 9th.—Widow G. at King Cross of late has had a perpetual noise in her head. Such a thing I never before heard described but as distressing and disagreeable, but she amused me by saying:—'It is delightful; like an organ, or heaven's angels!'

Mr. Collins was much cheered by the deep experience and joyous exultation of some of the Leaders of the Society, together with the simplicity and earnest sincerity manifested by chief people in his Circuit.

Thursday, November 27th, and Friday, November 28th, were spent in special services at Cheetham Hill, Manchester. Among the seekers, one particularly arrested the attention of Mr. Collins. His words were few, his manner quiet, almost motionless, yet his soul seemed struggling with pressing agony. The night was cold, yet sweat stood in beads upon his brow. Relief came at length, and the young man exulted greatly. Of the result of these services the Rev. S. R. Hall wrote:—"Six young persons have found peace. Several elder people also have obtained salvation; while not a few are rejoicing in the deepening of the work of grace. At the Saturday band, instead of thirty we had eighty

present, and the testimonies concerning good recently received were very distinct and encouraging."

A few Friday closet jottings will probably show us the sweet communion still maintained.

"Friday, January 2nd, 1857.—I have given myself to the Lord for this year. I cannot fast, as once I could; but by taking a biscuit at one o'clock I am still able on Fridays to have the seclusion of my room, without injury, until tea time. Now, if I feel I need it, without any scruple I take a chop with my tea. It is not penance, but retirement with God that I want. Those hours, given up to communion, I find to be most sweet, refreshing and valuable. My mind at such times, is led to the Bible, to thanksgiving, and to prayer, and to acts of trust. This day I meditated upon Isaiah lxiii. 15. I took the words as from Messiah's lips; He standing as Head of His people appeals thus to the Father:—'Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of Thy holiness and of Thy glory: where is Thy zeal and Thy strength, the sounding of Thy bowels and of Thy mercies towards me? Are they restrained?' I, being one of Christ's members, felt, in my great Advocate's name, daring of faith to urge again this ancient appeal to the Paternal heart.

"Friday, January 30th.—I pleaded this day for a blessing on the few remaining months I have in this Circuit. I was refreshed by the word,—'Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thy heart.' I do delight in the Lord.

"Friday, February 13th.—My meditation had reference to Luke xi. 13: 'If ye, being evil,' &c. I was strengthened by consciously receiving into my soul the Holy Spirit. It was a baptism for the good of my family, and of my Circuit. I long for Christ to have more souls by me in this Circuit.

"Friday, February 20th.—I waited upon the Lord. His word was Num. xi. 23: 'Is the Lord's hand waxed short?' My whole heart answers, 'No.'

"Friday, April 17th.—My meditation upon the Transfiguration has been sweet.

"Friday, May 29th.—My thoughts to-day turned first upon the Father's name, Exod. ix. 16: "That Thy

name may be declared throughout all the earth.' Psalm lxviii. 4: 'Who rideth upon the heavens in His name JAH.' Psalm lxxiii. 18: 'That men may know that Thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art most high over all the earth.' I then thought upon the glory of the beloved Son, as revealed in John xvii. I adored also the Spirit of grace, duteously and reverently opening my heart for His fulness. I do receive Him strengthening me for all His purposes."

In care of the sick, Mr. Collins was always exemplary. Within four months I find notes of *ten* death-bed scenes. Take one:—"Tuesday, December 16th.—I spent a little time with Richard Wood, our chapel-keeper. He and the late Joseph Holmes were among the first to be convinced of the duty of entire consecration. They conversed on the matter, and agreed together that seeing it to be God's will, they would never rest until it was their experience. They were not long of this mind before 'they were filled with the Spirit,' and their hearts overflowed with perfect love. In each case it has been the anointing for glory. James Holmes is there: Richard Wood I found upon the threshold. When I began to pray, I heard the dying man say, 'It is too much.' At those words I lowered my voice, and softened my tones; but, on rising, he told me, it was not my voice, but God's rich blessing that seemed more than he could bear. In a rapture he added:—"What a prospect! What a magnificent prospect! What an expanse!" His waving hand and brightening look gave intense expression to his words. When a little calmer, he said:—"The chapel people may wish to hear something of the end of their old servant; tell them what is fit; but, Sir, don't praise me. Extol the Saviour. Who would not die to go to be with Him?"

Around the good pastor, who thus cheered the closing hours of members of his flock, death soon threw a darker shadow. He was called to weep the departure, from the circle of his own family, of one much loved:—

"Wednesday, March 4th, 1867.—I received a summons to Tranmere. Barney was seriously ill. I went at once. As I approached his bed,—my arrival being earlier than expected,—he gratefully exclaimed, 'Brother,

O, what a brother you are !' The complacency and trust that mingled in his tone I can never forget. It moved my heart inexpressibly. I thought at once, and spoke to him, of the joy and faith with which we ought to meet the advances of that great elder Brother of our race, who has done all for all."

The poor sufferer's expiring life went out fast. In early morning of the very next day the struggle ended. The brief interval was well filled with interchanges of words of consolation and of hope. Though feeling never intensified to rapture, peace abounded. "It is not my nature," said Barnabas, "to shine out." This was true; yet "he feared no evil." When his extremities, numb and cold, no longer obeyed his will, free from alarm, he happily said, "A good sign! A good sign!" It was so to him. It meant heaven near. Breathing with difficulty, he asked to be raised; that done, he gently passed, just as he might have wished, supported by his brother's hand, and leaning on his sister's breast.

He was a most humble, affectionate, sober-minded man, greatly desirous of being and of doing good. The Clergyman whose Curate he had been wrote in well-weighed words, "Of his piety and solid Christian worth I entertain the highest opinion."

Of mortal omens and presages—matters long debated—I offer no opinion; but, for the sake of the curious, note that Mr. Collins records in his Journal how, being alone in his chamber, the evening before his brother's demise, he heard, as if within it, music, soft and low, like the airs of a flute. He further states that, mentioning this, he was assured that when Miss Clay died at Gate Farm, Greetland, harmonies were heard similarly sounding, as though they came from an organ which was indeed in the house, but the keys of which at that time no human fingers touched.

On Monday, June 8th, Mr. Collins went to Manchester to be present at a ministerial conference for consideration of the best means of suppressing the liquor traffic. Three hundred ministers were there. Mr. Collins says:—"A deputation of working men, imploring Ministers to use all the means in their power to remove this temptation out of the way of their

children, very much moved me. A godly and becoming spirit pervaded the Conference. All objections that I have ever heard against the object aimed at may be included in one word, 'Utopian !' Of what good thing has that not at first been said ?"

On Monday, June 15th, Mr. Collins visited Mrs. Wadsworth, an aged woman who heard Mr. Wesley twice. Her conversion was memorable, she being the first fruit of a revival which, though half a century has passed, is still spoken of at Greetland. The great work began thus : one Sunday morning the preacher, the Rev. Robert Lomas, had not proceeded far in prayer before his voice trembled and his words were choked : the woman Mr. Collins visited, being present, lifted her eyes to discover the cause of that broken utterance, and saw that the Minister's face was wet with tears. The sigh melted her. At the close of the prayer Mr. Lomas told the people, "All last night I prayed for you." The sermon smote, and that day a mighty movement commenced, which accelerated until cautious people feared wildness, and would have stopped it ; but John Pawson said, "It is of God ; let it alone. If you will not throw cold water on it, it will bless you all."

Mr. Collins was a true son of consolation. Neither lateness nor distance kept him from the afflicted when they needed him. He says :—"Mr. L. sent for me. I went. He spake of the enemy. I told him of the Friend. He covenanted with me two things : first, to die rather than sin ; and, second, to die rather than doubt. So he came to faith. We had a hymn. I then read Psalm xxv., and prayed. Near midnight I left him singing,—

My God is reconciled,  
His pardoning voice I hear ;  
He owns me for His child,  
I can no longer fear.

I walked home through the darkness, exulting in the Lord. If people would praise God, they would neither need pastimes nor fear footpads."

Abundance in the purse never tempted Mr. Collins to self-indulgence. He continued simple and inexpensive in all his habits, that he might be generous to the neces-

sitous. The Rev. J. Floyd, one of his colleagues, says, "He delighted in the company of Christ's poor. He often took tea in the midst of their families, and in cases of distress they were not only cheered by the sympathy which took him there, but also liberally aided by the gifts he left behind him."

A correspondent writes :—"I am but a working man, and have but a lowly home, yet Mr. Collins was a frequent visitor there. The remembrance of his pastoral kindness and of his condescending, loving intercourse will ever be cherished by my family with grateful affection."

Another says :—"Out of a number of charitable acts known to me I will tell you one. A thinly-clad child was following the carts to pick up such little fragments of coal as fell in their track. 'Why do so, my child?' 'Because, please Sir, we have none at home.' 'Why does not your father buy you some?' 'Father is dead, Sir.' 'Where does your mother live?' The humble cot was pointed out, and the questioner was soon over its threshold. Next morning, to gladden the widow's winter, a load of coals, much to her astonishment, was shot down at her door."

The poor loved Mr. Collins for his beneficence; the unlettered flocked to hear his homely sermons, and even the profane revered his spotless character. The Curate of Greetland tells me that a cottager, whose eye brightened at the mention of Mr. Collins's name, said of him. "Sir, if you took a good horse, and rode the country through, you would not in a summer's day come up with a better preacher or a better man."

A lady once seeking, in Sowerby Street, to check the ill words of a blasphemer, using a common phrase, said, "Why swear, *good man*?" and was oddly answered, "Why do you *tell lies* by calling me *good*? I only know *one good man* in all the town, and *that is Collins, the Methody Parson*."

A singular instance of the place he held in the esteem of evil doers happened to himself. His diary records :—"As I was coming home, a man 'in drink' accosted me. 'I like you,' said he, 'and I like your family, and I like your ways.' 'Well,' I replied, 'I am glad to be thought



worthy of the approbation of my neighbours ; but one of my ways is to keep away from the public house.' 'A very good way too,' replied the poor fellow ; ' but, you see, they catch me sometimes.' "

In all his journeys Mr. Collins, like his Master, went about doing good. Of course such associations as the chances of transit afford were not all found by him to be of yielding stuff. Thus, once he met with a sceptic who, stupidly mistaking a symbol in a poetic book for a concrete—stone and mortar—architectural fact, thought it witty to say, that "he found no inticement to heaven; and certainly would rather not go than live in the top stories of a city twelve thousand furlongs high."

Shortly after, an Antinomian came in his way, who made light of sin, and despised warning as a legalism unworthy of the elect. To such a one, who lived vilely, and yet said, "I have no fears for myself," Rowland Hill readily replied, "Then I have many fears for you." Such filthy dreamers John Calvin would have spurned. He, at all events, believed, "God hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, *that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.*"

The next unmanageable companion was a lady, a Papist. One of the many American sects gets the quaint title of "Hardshells." The name would have done for her. Quite confident that her creed had the suffrage of all the Fathers, though of them she had never read a single page; too narrow to believe that any good could be in a Protestant; too nimble of tongue to leave space for many words from anybody else; too prejudiced to set the slightest value upon the few they might be able to interject; and too scrupulous to allow her eyes to be defiled by contents either of Gospel or tract; she seemed absolutely shot-proof.

Though not in every instance successful, yet to many a fellow-passenger Mr. Collins preached Jesus with saving results. Much good so done is known, but much more waits for the final day to declare.

To children in the Sowerby Bridge Circuit unusual blessing came through special sermons to them, special meetings for them, and special attention given at their homes. Many were gathered into the Church.

Free from the cares of superintendency; retired to some extent from labours of outgoing, Mr. Collins, during these three years, set himself heartily to fresh and deeper studies of the Word. From pure joy in the work, he composed here more—and more valuable—sermons than he had within the same space of time ever done in his life before.

From various sources I learn that here, as elsewhere, the impression left was, that they had had among them a man very spiritually-minded; an eminent Christian; a true saint; a great enemy to indolence, trifling, and worldly conformity. His thorough acquaintance with the Word of God gave wealth of truth both to his conversation and to his preaching. Talk, in his presence, seemed always to go right. If he were there, social gatherings were felt to be means of grace.

The scene, when the Quarterly Meeting gave him its thanks, was most affecting. The testimonies to his usefulness, numerous and hearty beyond any comparison, made tears of adoring gratitude and love flow fast from many eyes.

Was this to be wondered at? As a Minister, he had not only done every duty of his place, but also added incalculable extra work, such as afternoon preachings in cottages, open-air addresses on spare evenings, and countless visitations of outcast sick and poor.

Holiness, whether he were speaking in pulpits or parlours, had, as usual, been his most loved subject. Frequency of recurrence in his lips produced, however, no sense of monotony. The deep, long-continued meditations of a mind of such native originality enabled him to treat the theme with a variety impossible to feebler, less thoughtful, or less experienced men. His pure life gave force to his witness, while his manifest and perpetual happiness invested his character with beauty, charm, and attractiveness rarely equalled.

## CHAPTER XV.

### LEAMINGTON.

MR. COLLINS attended the Conference at Liverpool. An incident at Stanhope Street chapel much delighted him. His friend, the Rev. E. Brice, preached; after the service a young man came into the vestry and said, "Mr. Brice, twenty years ago, in this very chapel, your hand baptized, and here, to-night, your sermon has led me to Jesus. Bless the Lord! and bless you!"

Mr. Collins writes:—"This is the first Conference I have known with Dr. Bunting away." The vacant place of that great man was appropriately and tenderly, yet manfully adverted to in the Annual Address:—"Voices, which for many years have counselled us, cease now to be heard among us. The strong man boweth down. The standard-bearer fainteth, not from lack of courage, but from loss of strength. It is as when David went no more out with his men to war. Yet we do not fail of heart or hope. God, who has guided us in the past, guides us still. Our trust is not in man, not even in the princes among men, but in the living God." This due mingling of respect for an honoured servant with unshaken confidence in the great Master was in the true Christian tone. "'God with us,' no leader's absence can arrest our army's march."

On Mr. Collins's return to Sowerby, an amusing incident occurred. Busy packing, he requested a young candidate for the ministry to take a week-night service for him, but was refused. "Well," said he, "if you will not do this little thing for me, I must consider what I can do for you." Those playful words were no fun to the young man; they sorely troubled him. Fearing that he had created an enemy, whose ill word,

perchance, might bar his way, he, a few days after, sought an interview. The reception he met, kind as usual, puzzled him. He inquired, "Sir, do you not remember your last saying to me?" "Perfectly." "How am I to understand it?" "Why, that *so soon as opportunity of serving you offers, I will embrace it.*" "But, Sir, the words were a threat." "Yes, if from a threatener's lips, but not from a Christian's." After the explanation the youth went home, not a little relieved by finding, that in his pastor's heart no worse intention rested than the Christ-like one of returning good for evil; that, in fact, the fancied menace was but a promise in disguise.

Proceeding to London for settlement of some affairs, Mr. Collins found himself—by unexpected reception of arrears—in better financial case than he had hoped. As it was not his custom to lay up treasure, he at once lightened his purse by presenting £50 to the funds of the Wesleyan Missionary Society; and also by giving a like sum to the Leamington Stewards, in aid of their addition of new rooms to the too diminutive Circuit house.

In consequence of this building work, with its dust, draughts, and disturbances, Mr. Collins kept back his wife for a short time, and tells with sprightliness the care he took in preparing for her comfort. Feeble, and often suffering, sleep with her needed wooing; but the bed he found, if intended to give ease, was a good specimen of *the art of how not to do it*. It would have served for the self-denials of an anchorite better than for the light slumbers of an invalid. There were not only boards athwart, but also a thick rail down the middle. He merrily says: "Until this unbending timber had been removed, that luxury of bed, a roll into the centre, was a vain thing."

An early letter to his friend, Thomas Worthington, fully expresses Mr. Collins's delight in entering upon his new sphere:—"Leamington suffered much by agitation; but the united labours of my predecessors, Sanger and Sharr, have been much blessed to its restoration. When stationed in Coventry, I often held happy services here. It somehow became a fixed idea in my mind that after serving the Lord awhile in rougher fields He would

lead me hither. By His providence I am now come. On the first Sabbath I gave tickets in the morning to brother Winterburn's class: by occasional pauses I got through; but, at brother Keartland's, in the afternoon, when I found nearly all athirst for full salvation, though I tried silence and pauses, I could command myself no longer, but burst into tears of joy. My first month has been one glow of delight. The country pleases me. The beautiful, clean, quiet town pleases me. The recollection of 'former rains' pleases me. But, above all, to find myself among many earnestly desiring to love my Master with all their hearts, and to feel that, concerning this matter, I have a message from God unto them, makes my cup run over, and fills me with a rapture that is inexpressible."

Local attachments were more common and stronger in the last age than in this. Railways have made Englishmen national. We belong to everywhere now-a-days. The parish is less and the realm more to us. In Mr. Collins the old fashion lingered. Affection for his own country was strong in him. He loved his native air, and of all shires put Warwick first. Appointment to Leamington, the very pearl of Warwickshire, could not but be a joy to him.

A Minister to whose Circuit Mr. Collins went for special service tells me:—"I drove him. The way lay through lonely woodland. All at once he cried, 'Stop.' I pulled up. He got out, and, taking off his hat, stood as if in mute adoration. It was the fresh springtime, and every branch seemed to have a songster amid its foliage of vivid green. 'Do you not hear,' said he, 'those little creatures? Their praise of God so stirs my soul that I can keep quiet no longer. Come down. They do all their nature can, but ours can do it better. *Let us say what they mean. Let us put into sentences what they are only able to breathe into music.*' I descended, and joined him. The doxology and prayer that followed I shall never forget."

With an ear so tuned, and a spirit so responsive, it is scarcely necessary to say that Mr. Collins never moaned, as some do, about country journeys. Village preaching always delighted him. His heart dictated when, to a

young Minister, his fingers wrote:—"Never shirk hard work, nor whine about long walks. Do not hanker to be perpetually before crowds, and preaching to cultured men. Look after the ignorant and such as are 'out of the way.' Labour that itinerancy lose not *its old glory*; that it cease not to be what so long it has been, a ministry of mercy to scattered cottagers, and *a boon to England's rural population.*"

An early Leamington diary beautifully shows how syivan tastes and love of God redeemed his weary pedestrian wayfarings from drudgery, and filled them with delight:—"Sunday, September 20th, 1857.—The day was fine, and the country lovely. I enjoyed amazingly the walk from Stratford to my afternoon appointment at Snitterfield. "The noble elms, the green hedgerows, and the many orchard trees, bending with fruit, delighted me. *I blessed the Lord for them all.* The flocks were at rest. No noise of toil broke from the quiet fields. Sabbath repose, such as towns never know, rested on all the scene, and each turn of the road brought fresh beauties into view. I thought, as I went on my way, of early days spent in these parts; I mused on the mercies of my life, and then gave thanks to God who had brought me hither to labour among a people of courteous manners and gentle spirit; quick to hear and willing to receive my simple witness. The sense of Divine goodness bowed me down, and the hope that I should prevail with many of them to accept the grace of perfect love so ravished my soul that I could not refrain from tears of joy as I walked."

Mr. Collins found a true helper in his colleague. Affectionate notices of Mr. Broadbent's usefulness are frequent. Over the directness of his preaching, the persistence of his labours, and the earnestness of his search after souls, his Superintendent greatly rejoiced.

Under date October 21st, I find memorable record of a profitable "Bible tea." A few of such as were panting after holiness were gathered to meet their pastor at the house of a common friend. The narrative says, "They dwelt upon the disease, I magnified the remedy." After sundry explanations of the blessing, and rehearsals of Divine promise concerning it, Mr. Collins turned to Mark xi. 24, and reasoned it over with them. "What

things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." All took part in the conversation; all seemed aided to believe; all solemnly covenanted together to continue in the exercise of that faith the act of which is expressed in those words:—

Saviour from sin, *I Thee receive,*  
From all indwelling sin.

The diary of November 11th furnishes an excellent specimen of skilful dealing with a difficult case. Zadoc T. lay ill. It is disappointing to find one bearing such a priestly name to be so ignorant. He felt no sin, and would own none. A prayer-book lay by the bedside; Mr. Collins took it up and read for him the confession. The man admitted that there might possibly have been some few offences, slight affairs, but nothing, nothing at all, deserving hell. His visitor next turned to the petition, "Most merciful Saviour, deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death," and said, "You think, then, a prayer like that unnecessary for you?" "Certainly." "Shall I cross it out?" "Well, no, Sir; the lady who gave the book might not like that. It will not hurt. I shall never say it." "But," said his faithful monitor, "your assertion of innocence does worse than clip a prayer, it rejects a Saviour. Paul, 1 Thess. i. 10, speaks of 'Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.' If you never were in peril of the wrath to come, then is Jesus no Jesus to you. Am I to understand that you let Christ, and Mercy, and Gospel go, and that, for eternity, you trust only to yourself?" "Well Sir, no, Sir, *I dare not go so far as that.*" "But you must do one thing or the other. You must either take place as a sinner, or, so far as you are concerned, you do repudiate the Saviour. Which shall it be?" Though, to that man, the words, "Our Saviour," could never have been more than a conventional phrase, yet, somehow, when brought up full before him, the idea of renouncing Jesus seemed terrible. The poor fellow recoiled, and felt, in his shudder at the thought, that his plea of innocence had broken down. He became a willing listener, as Mr. Collins taught him to pray:—

By Thy Spirit, Lord, reprove,  
 All my inmost sins reveal;  
 Sins against Thy light and love,  
 Let me see and let me feel.

A little subsequently the Journal registers two facts of the class which give point and barb to pulpit admonitions. J. T. a sottish tinner, being drunk on Sunday night, as he went reeling towards his home, fell headlong down some steps; and after some hours, was found, with fractured skull, lying at the bottom of them, quite cold and dead. The very same week, P., another inebriate, staggered into the canal, and was found drowned. Both these, in illness, Mr. Collins had visited and reproved. He observes:—"Since they hardened their necks, and would not be warned, God, in righteousness, has made them warnings."

On Wednesday, November 25th, Mr. Collins met Mr. and Mrs. Graham at Lady Carnegie's. They had just returned from an evangelical gathering at Berlin. Their account of the royal reception at Potsdam, given to members of the Alliance, by the King and Queen of Prussia, was exceedingly interesting.

The Quarterly Meeting, held December 28th, was cheered by the report of an increase of twenty members, with sixty on trial.

Mr. Collins once asked a farmer's boy, a Sunday scholar, "Where are you in reading? as far as the Bible?" "The Bible!" he exclaimed, "*I am a long way beyond that!*" It was Mr. Collins's fear that, in some places where he had laboured, many, *in hearing*, had got "a long way beyond that." Simple messages from the Lord were distasteful to them; their hunger was for talent, intellect, and eloquence. He says,— "they lusted after great men; looked for commodities from London; and despised the idea of being one whit behind metropolitans: but my people here appear to be content with communications from heaven, whether *via* London or not."

A field labourer followed Mr. Collins, one week night, from a village chapel, "Thank you, Sir," said he, "for that sermon. I understood every word of it; and so I did when you were here on Sunday." This praise from



the lowly, even though balanced by scorn of the vain, he greatly delighted in. Mr. Collins's sermons, like a king in homespun, did not always get the respect they deserved. The feeble-witted folk, who mistook glitter for gold, and nebulosity for depth, sometimes pronounced his plain speech to be shallow and mean; but better judges wondered at his strength, and admired his simplicity. His power of searching the heart was not often equalled. A scholar and a gentleman, who was sometimes an auditor, said, "All your discourses seem to be *about me*. None other, that ever I hear, *get inside me as yours do*."

About this time good work was done among young people. One went home in inconcealable distress; she at once begged her grandmother to go with her to her chamber and pray; in that chamber she received comfort. Another, having, in the lovefeast, heard testimony of some who had brought matters to an issue by determining that they would give no sleep to their eyes until they found the Lord, set herself in like manner to a vigil of prayer. The selfsame night Jesus, to her also, manifested Himself.

One of the delights of Mr. Collins's present location was, that his evangelistic excursions from that centre led him up and down among scenes of former labours. Many of the converts made during his previous four years' ministry within the bounds of the Birmingham District, he found to be firmly fixed monuments of grace, pillars of the churches, and not a few of them lovely witnesses of full salvation.

Mr. Collins strengthened himself in hope: he writes—"It may be that in this place the Lord will requite the sore travail of my heart, and give me many children, as in the days of old. Methodism in this fashionable centre attracts little public attention. Our cause is not much thought of by the great and gay who throng this town. Yet Jesus regards us in our low estate. I often in the closet see the glory glancing down from the face of the Beloved."

Mr. Collins's strong sense and thorough knowledge of God's Word made him very useful when presiding among his lay helpers. A Local Preacher, in recoil from the

Sabellianism taught by some aggressive Swedenborgian lecturer, unguardedly spoke of separate Persons of the Godhead. His pastor at once reminded him that the catholic faith is this:—"That we worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance;" the ancient phrase which duly and justly expresses the orthodox idea being "distinct persons," not "separate persons." "But, Sir," said the puzzled polemic, "can a thing be distinct without being separate?" "O yes," was the reply, "we need not soar so high to find out that. "See that lamp: its flame, its heat, its radiance, are certainly distinct, but yet *essentially* inseparable."

At the same meeting an ill-furnished candidate for place on the Plan presented himself. The examination of him brought out a strange "Comedy of Errors." "Why are these brethren called Local Preachers?" Whether, seeing that his defective theology had insured that it was all over with him, he wished to have a Parthian shot at his censors as he retired, I cannot say; but he gravely answered, "The name (*q. d.*, 'low call') signifies them to be of a lower order than the Travelling Preachers." An etymologist whose mistakes were satires, would never do. The brethren dropped him *instantly*.

I throw together, and subjoin, a few characteristic critiques penned about this time:—

"Heard the Rev. J. A. James. His subject led him to describe the religious quickening in the last century. I noticed that he coupled Whitefield and Wesley; but invariably in that order, always giving precedence to Whitefield. After exulting over the great revival now in progress in America, he observed, 'Some shrink from acknowledging anything Divine about it, because there is slavery in America. He admitted the fact, but added, to show that the work might be genuine nevertheless, 'Whitefield had slaves.' My Methodist heart beat quicker with joy at the thought that he could not put John Wesley's name first, second, or anywhere, in connection with that evil thing which, with incomparable force, his pen has branded for all time as 'the execrable sum of all villanies.' To see Mr. James looking so

well, to hear him preach so ably, and, above all, to observe the affectionate earnestness of his manner, greatly delighted me."

"Attended the District Missionary Meeting in the Town Hall at Birmingham. Thornton and Punshon served the cause admirably. The third speaker did not achieve much. His time was consumed, I fear wasted, in laboured descriptions of battlefields and graveyards. These piles of rhetoric never stir Christian people so deeply as information about God's work, and strong theology manfully put."

"Heard Dr. Dixon at City Road. The text was, 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.' The view set before us of the work was comprehensive; the faith was noble that glowed in his exhibition of the purpose and competency of Christ to carry it on, and to finish it successfully. The doctor's infirmity of vision and increasing weakness rob him of physical power; but, on the other hand, they awaken so much respectful and affectionate sympathy, that I know not whether the final effect be less than in the days of his prime."

"Heard Dr. Guthrie at Queen Street from, 'It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell.' The sermon was rich in truth, fresh in form, simple in language, beautiful in illustration, and replete with heavenly unction."

"Heard Spurgeon at the Surrey Gardens. He did three capital things: he spoke vital truth, he spoke out, and he spoke home. These things people like. The vast hall was crowded. I rejoiced at the sight. The Gospel hath its old power yet."

Mr. Collins's Journal registers a remarkable narrative which he heard, and thus noted down from the lips of an eye-witness:—

"Mr. W said, 'My friend, the late Rev. John Henley, when attempting to preach out of doors in a village within the bounds of the Witney Circuit, was so persistently disturbed by a rude, ungodly blasphemer, that he thought it wise quietly to dismiss the congregation with a blessing, subsequently announcing the date upon which he would again be there. 'Ay,' cried the sot, 'and I'll be here with you, and put you down again.'"

‘God will not let you.’ ‘I’ll try Him,’ said the ribald. ‘God will not let you,’ was firmly repeated. The day came. Henley preached; and the congregation shuddered as, ere the service was halfway through, they saw the coffined corpse of that shameless man borne past them to its unhonoured grave.”

Jottings of travel, well worthy of memory, are frequent:—

“Saturday, July 10th, 1858.—I was hospitably entertained at Mr. Loxton’s. The servant—she informed me, her brother also—was one of my spiritual children.

“Sunday, July 11th.—I opened a new schoolroom at Woodside. The Lord helped me. The people responded and wept as of old. Many after the service claimed filial relation to me.

“Monday, July 12th.—As I was proceeding by third class to Birkenhead, three butchers got into the carriage. Two were grave, the third was young and jocose. ‘Come,’ said he, as soon as he was set down, ‘we have some pretty young women here, anyhow.’ The young women referred to seemed confused by this uninvited admiration: so, to turn his attention from them I offered him a tract. He refused it, saying, that he neither was religious nor ever would be. I answered with a hope that his last words might not prove to be true. He said, ‘I don’t like cant. We are sent into the world to do good; and perhaps I do more of that than some who talk so much.’ ‘We agree so far,’ I replied, ‘I also hate cant, and like to do good. But, I have observed that they are most likely to do good who have first sought to be good.’ ‘Well,’ said he, ‘I bring up a family of fatherless and motherless children; I reckon that that is good.’ ‘It is, exceedingly good to them. Are they your brothers and sisters?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Then, for taking such care of them, you are a very kind brother? Are there any little ones among them? any that would like a few picture books?’ ‘Ay! they are always after pictures.’ ‘Here, then,’ said I, ‘are some.’ He took them readily; nor did he now refuse the tract I slipped in for himself. We thus got upon good terms; and at the end of the journey he heartily bade me ‘good bye;’ and the young women, whom I

found to be of a godly family, thanked me for having been their shield.

"Tuesday, July 13th.—I passed a pleasant evening hour conversing with my relatives in Henry's garden. From thence were visible, here, iron furnaces, belching flames; yonder, long, graceful lines of light marking the course of the gaslit streets. Now and then the sky was irradiated by most beautiful fireworks, shot up from some public gardens not far distant; while over the busy Mersey, ships and steamers, making strange reflections in the waters, were gliding hither and thither. We sat until half-past ten, and the air was so soft, and the scene so delightful, that I could have stayed all night. When I got in, the hostess at my lodging became communicative; told me of an offer of marriage; asked my opinion; and, to help my judgment, drew *from her bosom* a photogram of the gentleman. When I saw whence the picture came, I suggested my notion that the time for giving opinions was gone. She smiled assent, and I hastened to rest.

"Wednesday, July 14th.—I arrived at Sowerby Bridge. Conversing with Mrs. T. of numbers whom recently I had known to be saved, she asked, 'Are such cases real?' and then added, 'Doubt of my own conversion is a temptation that often besets me. I never contend with the accuser about whether it were genuine or not. I just reply, "Granted, Satan, that I never was saved before, I will be this hour, for I accept the Saviour now."' I replied, 'The relief you get comes not from what you grant to the devil, but from what you receive from Jesus; which might just as well have been received without that grant. Your plan, as you see, leaves you inclined to question the work of God upon others; it formally surrenders what you should hold, and God be praised for; and, after all, it is but a device, an untrue thing; you do not, in your heart, grant what you say; it ignobly evades the foe who ought to be smitten and conquered. *For my part, I grant the devil nothing, but resist him, "steadfast in the faith."*'"

On Monday, July 19th, Mr. Collins returned home. The journey was not without peril. The train by which he travelled, ill-guided, ran into some coal-trucks. The

concussion gave him a blow which broke a tooth in his mouth. Many passengers were much shaken and severely bruised, but no life was lost; and, so far as he knew, but for his unfortunate tooth, it might have been said that no bone was broken. To an Irishman, injured in a similar disaster, a fellow-passenger remarked, "You must sue the directors for damages." "Damages is it you say? I've had enough of them, sure. *It's repairs I'm wanting.*" Mr. Collins, much of the same mind, left the directors untroubled, but resorted to his dentist, got a new tooth, and so the matter ended.

"Thursday, July 22nd.—On my way to Watlington I reached Oxford by an evening train. As I wished to look round the city, I found home for the night in a comfortable inn. At five in the morning I arose, and, in the chamber there, had sweet communion with the Lord. My meditations were based upon John xiv. 15: 'If ye love Me, keep My commandments.' I carefully scrutinised myself by that test. I said, 'O Lord Jesus, of what is due unto Thee my efforts come short: but yet, Thou that knowest all things knowest that I love Thee. My illness has made some bodily indulgence necessary; but I am jealous lest I should allow too much, or extend the term of it too long. Thy mercy has very considerably restored me. Help me, therefore, to return to my forewonted self-denials, whether as to abstinence, early rising, or work. I deplore before Thee that many excellent thoughts which Thou from time to time has given me, by my omission of painstaking record, to my loss, and to the loss of Thy people, have been let slip. By Thy grace I here devote myself to do with fresh diligence Thy work. I will especially endeavour that my conversation with all manner of persons shall more directly convey to them testimony for Thy truth, and words for their salvation. With Thee, O Jesus, I covenant to attempt these things, believing that Thou wilt pray the Father, and that He will give me the Comforter to enable me to perform them.'"

Sallying forth, after breakfast, Mr. Collins met, fortunately, with a policeman off duty. The man proved to be a Wesleyan, and made it a labour of love to take the stranger Minister in charge, and show him round the sights of the

city. Not unnaturally, Mr. Collins's chief interest was in the Martyrs' Memorial, near to the spot where Latimer told Ridley to play the man in the fire ; in Lincoln College, of which John Wesley was sometime Fellow ; and in St. Mary's church, where, on Friday, August 24th, 1744, that great man preached to a crowded congregation his last university sermon. The subject was, "Scriptural Christianity ;" the text, Acts iv. 31. The conclusion is a warning appeal, serious, compassionate, and—though without anger, satire, or invective—of incomparable fidelity. After that faithful discourse, Mr. Wesley wrote, "I have fully delivered my soul. I am clear of the blood of these men." It was not long before intimation was given him that he might testify in that pulpit no more. When, as a Fellow of the college, his turn to preach recurred, thenceforth the authorities called him not, but paid another to take his place. The day of this final service happened on the anniversary of that Black 1662 Bartholomew, when so many godly Ministers were at once ejected from the Church by law established in these realms. Among those confessors, Dr. Annesley and John Wesley of Whitchurch, grandsires of the preacher, had both been numbered. When adverting to his barring-out from the university pulpit, this parallel of date appears to have been a comfort. Mr. Wesley felt honoured that, in some sort, persecution had put him in line with Baxter and Bates, Howe and Henry, and their compeers of the former age. The thing being done, he says, "I am well pleased that it should be on the very day upon which, in the last century, near two thousand burning and shining lights were put out at one stroke." The Church that rejected Wesley did it much to her loss, and more to her shame. Of that evil good hath come. Methodism, free as Christianity in the Apostolic age, blesses the world better for being unencumbered either with the Service Book, the ceremonials, or the trammels of the State religion.

From Oxford Mr. Collins took rail to Culham ; from thence proceeded by waggon to Dorchester. Dined at Dorchester. He says, "When the waitress at the inn brought me water, I took occasion to remind her of that Fountain which the Lord hath opened, in which

poor sinners may wash and be clean. She wept as I spoke."

Setting forth again he preached Gospel on the road to a beggar, who went the same way for a mile. His next companion was a mother, evidently much weary with long carrying of her child. "Would you leave it?" he asked. "Not for my life," she replied. He then told her of a Father whose arm never tires, and of whose love her motherly affection was but a dim shadow.

Soon after she stayed at her cot, the road divided, and no finger-post was there to tell the puzzled pedestrian the way he should take. He got over a gate, made up to a busy reaper, and asked of him direction. The man readily and courteously gave it. Mr. Collins says:—"I prayed the Holy Ghost to direct him into the way of the cross." "Sir," said the man, "*are you a Methodist Preacher?*" The man was a Methodist member, so the two were "at one" directly.

Wearied by carrying a carpet bag, in a harvest day, through a walk of eight miles, when he reached the village of Bridewell, he turned into the first house of refreshment he saw, and desired the woman to get him a cup of tea. She gruffly told him, "They sold beer, not tea, there." He turned pleasantly to the little boy, prattled with him a little while, and then gave him a book. The loquacious child soon let him know that he had a sister upstairs in bed, whither she had been sent for some fault. A little picture was added to the gift for her also, when she should come down and do better. After this little scene, turning to the mother, he said, "Perhaps you would give me a cup of cold water, Ma'am." Soft words had killed her unkindness. "Sit down, Sir," she said; "*I have put the kettle on.*"

The day ended by his safe arrival at Watlington, at the house of his son in the Gospel, the Rev. Daniel Farquhar, in which Circuit he did service with encouraging success.

The next Journal entry was of intense domestic interest:—"Tuesday, August 17th, 1858.—I gave my dear child Emily in marriage to the Rev. John Broadbent. All the help I could summon, either of reason or faith, was needed to enable me to make with equanimity



the surrender of a treasure that had been so precious. The Holy Presence overshadowed us in the devotional exercises of the day. May the Lord's blessing be upon both!"

Doubtless the paternal blessing fell; but Heaven's answers come not always in the shape we wish. The fair dawn of that sweet bride's life was soon and sadly overcast. One short month found her returned to her home, the subject of distressing illness.

Mr. Collins writes:—"September 21st.—Through the night dear Emmy was sleepless and in pain. At four A.M. I withdrew to my study to plead for her relief. Approaching my heavenly Father, I first set myself to embrace His whole will. I prayed Him, at whatever cost to me, to glorify Himself. I then reminded Him that my child was His child; that my love for her was from Him, and but a shadow of His; I committed her into His hands, assuring myself that His protecting power was so great that none else could hurt us, and His Paternal love so tender that He would not.

"I next recognised the rights of Jesus, my Master. To His decision, as my Sovereign Lord, I asked perfect submission, but yet put before Him my petition. I reminded Him of His own strong crying and tears, and cast myself upon His sympathy.

"I then addressed myself unto the adorable Spirit; spoke to Him of my sorrows, and drew near to Him as my Comforter.

"From my Triune Friend, my Covenant God, who withholdeth no good thing, I humbly asked sleep for my suffering child."

A speedy answer came. She, who for two nights had had no sleep, in half an hour gently sank into a slumber, from which, for eight hours, she did not awake. Thus soon prayer was turned into praise.

During a necessary absence Mr. Collins wrote the following precious words of counsel to the much harassed sufferer:—"You speak of temptation: make not too much of it. We do unwisely when we magnify our assailant. He is but a conquered devil after all. Let your thoughts dwell most upon the almightiness of your Helper. Magnify Him. Do so, do so, my child.

"Receive God's unspeakable gift, accustom your heart

to the ceaseless habit of believing gratitude for it. Let the breath of your soul be, 'Thanks be unto Thee, O God.'

"You tell me that I do not know the vileness of your sin. The vileness of sin—yours, mine, anybody's—God only knows. But though we know not the vileness of sin, we do know, and are sure of, the superabounding vastness of grace. Abandon yourself, a wretch undone and lost, into the broad depths of atoning love revealed in the blood of Jesus. This shall be your righteousness.

"In regard of cure, what means can do is being done ; but the Lord above means can do all for you. Habituate yourself to repose in Him. Yes, repose entirely upon your heavenly Father. Have faith in God, and be of a tranquil mind. God will glorify His name. That contented His Son, and should content us, dear Emmy.'

This painful season led to great searchings of heart. "Have I loved this dear creature too much? Have I thought too much of her? As to my love of her, the Lord knows that *what I loved most in her was her love of Him.*"

During the continuance of the trial exercises of submission were frequent. "What ground have I to claim exemption from the common human lot? Shall not I, who all my life have been receiving mercies at the hand of the Lord, now, patiently, bear His stroke?"

While these thoughts precluded murmuring, they no way barred his right of telling the Lord his sorrow ; of setting before the Paternal heart his wish, and of making his supplication known. Accordingly his own pleadings were oft protracted until midnight. Colleagues and friends of known spiritual power were taken aside, that they might join their entreaties with his own. His wife was called in to share his Friday retirement, and the Society gathered in special meeting for united intercession.

Mr. Worthington writes :—"I met Mr. Collins, by appointment, in the Minister's vestry. A fire had been kindled, as if for a lengthened service. We were alone. He unbosomed to me the exceeding pressure of sorrow he felt on behalf of his beloved and suffering child. He told me how, while making true acts of submission, he had lately felt drawings towards acts of faith for relief. Then adverting to the touching circumstances ; a bride, stricken with affliction in her honeymoon : affliction which, so

timed, could not but give exquisite anguish to her parents, and throw early shadow along the life-path of her husband. He requested my unbiassed judgment, whether this were such a case as would warrant our united claiming, for her healing, the Lord's Word, written Matt. xviii. 19: 'If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father, which is in heaven.' I answered that, in my mind, it was. Then said he solemnly, 'I intend to put my Heavenly Father to the trial. Will you agree with me not to leave the throne of grace until we receive inward assurance that this cup will pass from us, and this request of ours be granted?' I replied, 'I do so agree; and, the Holy Ghost being my helper, will not cease my plea until the answer come.'

"I had seen much of my ever-to-be revered friend before: I had often seen him clothed with Divine power when, as upon Samson, 'the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him;' but, now, I saw him, Jacob-like, wrestling with God in an agony of prayer. *The struggle continued for hours.* I, strengthened by witnessing a pleading that would not be denied, and the efforts of a faith that would not yield, grew sweetly assured that Heaven's 'So be it' had been uttered. At length, similar conviction turned Mr. Collins's prayer to praise. He rose, made the place ring with his hallelujahs, threw his arms round my neck, and wept tears of pure joy. That scene of conflict and of triumph can never be erased from my mind while memory holds its seat."

After that morning, Mr. Collins never wavered. He *knew* that the Lord had in mercy heard. Soon the black cloud broke, the peril passed, and the beloved sufferer was restored. But, though back in the circle, quick eyes thenceforth saw Heaven's mark upon her. Mr. Collins himself, from that time, kept the idea that she was but lent, and would be—as in fact turned out—at an early date reclaimed. Thus writing to the Rev. James Harris, he said:—"My dear child is better. Yet the thought continually comes over me, with strange reality, that the Lord intends to call her early home. O my friend!—but I check myself. At *this time* the Lord hath heard me, and I will not antedate future sorrows,

nor allow myself to wander beyond the present moment and the present duty. To the glory of God I must add, that by sending us more to prayer; by teaching us to hold each other in God's will; and by preparing us to sympathize with the sorrows of others; this has proved to be a blessed affliction."

About this time there came to Leamington a peripatetic shilling-gatherer, an orator by trade, whose chief capital lay in lungs and brass; his theme was Wesley. That name drew Mr. Collins among the auditors. The subject was beyond the man. Brief listening would have made Henry Moore say to him, "Sir, the well is deep, and *thou* hast nothing to draw with." Evidence was wanting alike of the insight of genius, and of the patience of research. The discourse was right when its authorities happened to be so. However, if it ran short of information, it had no lack of venom. Inuendo, satire, and invective against the Methodism of to-day were blended in it with considerable clap-trap skill. Mr. Collins—ever loyal—rose at the end, and—without debating opinions—calmly corrected some of the lecturer's errors in fact. He left the room convinced that the chief performer there had more action than elegance, more rhetoric than knowledge, and more impudence than either.

Mr. Collins's frame had irrecoverably lost its early hardness. The nerves of steel that once accepted pleasantly wood, or damp sea-cave, as closet, now thrilled with agony in the currents of a draughty room. The Leamington study was not the best thing in the Circuit; it had the chapel wall for a prospect, and was sunless and cold. Mr. Collins had always rejoiced to be much alone; to stay with God; and, as he said, "*to ply arguments in prayer.*" Though his fellowship abridged would, to most, have been communion notably extended, yet he mourned the physical necessity which, by rheumatic pain, ever-recurring in that gloomy place, contracted the hours of his beloved retirement. One chilly Sabbath, his morning interview with his Master thus abbreviated, he went forth to his duties, though uncondemned, depressed. To the first person he met, he gave a tract. "Thank you, Sir," said the man, "and may God bless your labours this day!" That unexpected

benison from the wayfarer sent the workman on with sunshine in his soul.

The diary contains the following characteristic obituary:—

“November 14th, 1859.—Daniel Farquhar died of typhus fever. He was my own son in the Gospel. The Lord gave him to me at Stronsay. He was a good man, and a diligent pastor. Through life he had many fears, but his dying witness was, ‘I am upon the Rock!’”

Special cases of usefulness still resulted from Mr. Collins's ministry. A young man, of respectable family, had been ensnared and disgraced by the demon of drink. His employer talked seriously with him, and besought him to become at once a teetotaler. “Never!” he replied energetically, “Never, while a blade of barley grows!” When found so stubborn, he was told, “Only regard for your worthy parents leads me to retain you one single day; but, take warning; that reason, weighing this once, will have place no more. Upon the next offence, you leave.” The following Sunday evening the youth was at chapel; the text was Dan. iv. 27: “Break off thy sins by righteousness.” Mr. Collins, in pithy words, showed how sinners should break off their sins:—*short off*;—*all off*;—*clear off*. As one close-fitting truth after another was uttered, the hearer felt indignant, thinking that the preacher had been informed of his misconduct; but, when afterwards assured that no such thing had been done, he said, “Well, it is clear, then, if you did not tell him, God did; for that sermon, every word of it, was to me.” He not only signed the pledge forthwith, but also set himself earnestly to seek the Lord.

Remaining notes enable me to present another picture of this vigilant evangelist on a journey. May his labour and success enable many another of the Lord's servants to scatter seed as they go!

“At the station I reproved a hoary blasphemer. The old man answered roughly at the first, but soon softened down, and gave me *good wishes* at parting. My next word was with a drunkard. These quick following instances of human sin and folly moved me to tears.

“In the train I presented a New Testament to a

soldier ; he received it gladly, and I was pleased to see that he caught my meaning at once when I called it 'a sword.' A cooper got in at an early station, and, without apology, lighted a pipe. After a little introductory talk I submitted for his consideration whether the cost of that cloudy gratification would not send a child to school ; and whether that would not be a better outlay, as it would confer a benefit that would last for ever ? He said, 'I never thought of that, but it is true ; so out goes the pipe, and here's for the child ?' 'Do you mean that ? Will you give up the practice ?' 'To be sure I will, and send the *young un* to school ?' 'I am glad so pleasantly to have put your pipe out. Will you oblige me by the gift of the cast-off thing ?' 'Certainly, Sir, here it is.' So, with joy, I brought the trophy home."

While away, walking through an old churchyard, Mr. Collins came upon a venerable stone erected many years ago by a widower. After the wife's name came her character, thus expressed, "AN ODD WOMAN." The very favourable traditional exposition of the doubtful phrase was that her husband held her to be of such unparalleled excellence, so uniquely good, that she must ever stand alone, the broad earth being unable to furnish for her a match.

On Sunday, February 19th, 1860, Mr. Collins preached at Oldbury. Several obtained mercy. Take one case. The notes are curt but instructive. "'Are you a believer ?' 'No.' 'How long have you been seeking salvation ?' 'Years.' 'Who is it, whom through all those years you have not believed ?' 'Christ.' 'What ? not believe Christ ! Is He a liar ?' The youth paused, then slowly and firmly answered, 'He is not.' 'But He says, "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life," and you can't believe Him.' 'I can.' 'You won't.' 'I will.' 'But you don't.' 'I do.' 'You won't continue.' 'I will.' 'Then, man, if these things be so, you are a believer.' 'Yes, now I am, and, hallelujah ! I, this moment, *feel* that God is my salvation.'"

"Saturday, May 19th.—I went to Erdington, four miles from Birmingham, to see the Rev. James Heaton, one of the guides of my youth. He was aged, bed-ridden, and blind, *yet happy* ! After praising God for

manifold help, he added :—‘ Yet now, in my meditations, I often see how I might have fulfilled my ministry more wisely.’ Wishing the benefit of his reviews of life, I asked what course, from his standpoint, appeared to be the wise one. He replied, ‘ A Minister should enter into, and devote himself wholly to the accomplishment of, God’s saving designs.’ This voice from the shores of eternity more than repaid the cost of my visit.”

“ Saturday, June 9th, 1860.—Lady Carnegie died, aged ninety-seven. This excellent person had, to the last, all the teachableness of a young convert. Her simplicity of faith was very beautiful. She was a friend to every good work, a liberal giver, and perfectly free from ‘ the pride of life.’ ”

“ Sunday, July 8th.—I preached at Barnacle. Mr. Birch told me how a singular piece of good fortune had happened lately to one in his employ. Having purchased a clock, to his dismay, he found that there was not room enough for its tall case to stand in his low-roofed kitchen. As the best help for a bad matter, he took up some quarries of the floor, and dug out a hole. While doing this, he turned up two ancient coins. They became playthings for his children, and were so some time before his attention was directed to them. When at length aware of their value, he at once made further search, and in the issue fourteen golden guineas rewarded his pains. The finding of that hidden treasure furnished an effective illustration for my sermon to the villagers.”

In the closing year of the Leamington appointment Mr. Collins was called to visit the county gaol, in the very difficult position of chosen spiritual adviser of a murderer, who was in confinement there. From his notes I will select enough to show his wise, faithful, and successful dealing with the case.

Tuesday, April 24th, 1860.—I was summoned to attend at Warwick gaol, upon Francis Price, a prisoner there. The charge against him was murder. I felt a momentary recoil from the man of blood ; but, as it seemed a call of duty, set forth earnestly praying for wisdom so to deal with the case that the culprit might be led to salvation, and at the same time the purity and honour of religion be magnified.

I was shown into a vacant cell ; the prisoner was brought to me, and we were locked in together, alone. His bewildered look im-

pressed me with an idea of defective intellect, which, however, my after intercourse removed. In answer to my inquiry, "Why did you send for me?" He said that he understood Methodists best; that he had most claim on them; that his father had been a lay preacher in the New Connexion; afterwards a hired Scripture Reader for them among the Papists of Limerick and Arran; that he died an accredited man among them; and that his Memoir might be found in their Magazine for the year 1845. From that Memoir, which I obtained afterwards and read, I found what encouraged me in hope for this guilty and wayward son. The good man in his dying hours had consoled himself with God's words of gracious promise for believers' children.

The early disposition of Francis appears to have been unusually vicious. When but a child, he was a truant from school, a pilferer at home, a lover of bad companions, ready at all mischief, and precocious in ill speech. The lad's mother only survived his father two years. Before she died, she apprenticed him to a shoemaker; from whose service, soon after her death, he absconded. Without parent or friend, he wandered over the land, suffering misery, and wallowing in vice. He begged with lying tales; picked up pence as a cad, or filched as opportunity served; ran races for money; enlisted, deserted, and enlisted again, three times; got into prison in Liverpool five months, and in Wakefield six, for stealing watches.

At Birmingham he fell violently in love with a comely and honest servant maiden. To set himself favourably before her he paid a skilled man to make a beautiful pair of boots which he presented to her as the work of his own hands. Deceived into the thought that he was a clever artizan and a true man, she promised to marry him. Soon—of course—tales of his evil antecedents reached her.

She then hesitated; told him he must wait; and, when his importunity became irksome, finally recalled her promise.

Passion made him desperate. On April 18th, 1860, he went to a neighbouring house, and sent for her in her sister's name. She came. Nor did she seem much surprised when she found the message to be a trick. She sat down. He sat at her right hand. "Will you have me?" he asked. Her refusal was immediate and decided. In a moment his left hand seized her head, while his right, with a shoemaker's knife, fatally gashed her throat. Almost instantly she fell dead at his feet.

Mr. Collins says of his interviews:—

All our talk had relation to his soul, was based upon the Bible, and accompanied with prayer.

Such notes of this prison intercourse as seem likely to edify, I subjoin:—

Tuesday, April 24th.—P. "Sir, do you think that there is any mercy for me?" C. "Not from man, so far as I know your case." P. "I do not expect that. I have committed the crime, and ought to suffer. But do you think God will forgive me?" C. "My commission is to preach the Gospel to every creature. The Gospel is



the *Good News*. It cannot be, then, upon my lips that there is with God no mercy for you ; for that would be terrible news."

Thursday, April 26th.—I found Price—though admitting the fact—to be in his own mind, habitually extenuating its guilt. The evil of his sin had to be laid bare. C. "Look what you have done, Sarah Pratt did right to refuse you ; you were of bad character." P. "Well, yes, but all was not true that was told her." C. "False information given to her was no reason why you should lay violent hands upon her. You drew her to you by treachery, and then, not giving her one moment for preparation, took away her life. There are men who scarcely know that we have souls, but you had early teaching ; you *knew* that your deed of blood would send her spirit, perhaps all unready, into the presence of her Judge." P. "Poor Sarah was a good girl." C. "So much the less she deserved such bad treatment." P. "O, I was mad with love." C. I have indeed heard of some who, wild with frenzy, have said, 'If we cannot live together, we will die together ;' but even that vain excuse fails you. However hot you were against her life, you were cool enough to spare your own." P. "I could have killed myself ; but I had heard that self-murder was the worst of crimes, and also knew that I should soon die by the law." C. "Such balancing of reasons excludes all extenuation on the plea of sudden over-mastering passion. You plotted beforehand. You took a knife with you. You invented a lie to ensnare your victim. You deprived her of life at a stroke, but took care to have yourself opportunity to prepare for death. And after all this you would soothe your conscience by saying that this foul murder, with such calculation and selfish exceptions done, was *done for love*." Here was a long pause. C. "Do you know the fifty-first Psalm ? Make that your daily prayer ; and may the Holy Spirit bring you to feel as David did when he composed it."

Monday, April 30th.—C. "I am not going to dwell upon the wrong you did to the young woman herself, and to society, in taking away her life ; but I wish you to-day, Price, to look at the deed you have done as it was a sin against God. Suppose you went into a field, and set your dog to worry a lamb, it would be, no doubt, a cruelty to the poor dumb creature, but who would bring you to account ?" P. "The owner." C. "Well, God is the *Owner* of mankind, 'the Possessor of Heaven and earth.' You broke down *His* hedge. You destroyed that poor lamb of *His* flock. Very shortly He will call you to account. What can you say before Him ?" P. "I hope He will have mercy upon me, and forgive me, and take me to heaven." C. "To be in heaven is to be 'for ever with the Lord.' Could two live happily together for ever who were not agreed ?" P. "No." C. "Consider how altogether opposite to the Lord you are. What did the love of Jesus lead Him to do for His enemies ?" P. "To die for them." C. "But what you call your love led you to murder your friend. He, as He died, prayed for His enemies ; you left not that poor girl one moment to pray for herself. Do you not see how unlike your love and the love of the Lord Jesus is ?" P. "I do." C. "And in other things you are just as unlike Him as in that. How can you be happy with Him ?" P. "O, Sir, I see it now : I must have a *new heart*."

Sunday, May 6th.—Many, at my request, were continually praying for Price, and I was, this day, gladdened to find that he had been much in prayer for himself. His spirit was tender. He had learned the fifty-first Psalm, and as he went over it, verse after verse, he marked its appropriateness. The conversation of the last visit was working in him. It was touching to hear how he accused himself of the slaughter of that defenceless lamb; of the wrong done to the great Owner; and how with tears he bewailed his utter unlikeness to Jesus.

Tuesday, May 8th.—We went over the history of David's great and complicated sin, with its extreme aggravations; took notice of his subsequent insensibility; of Nathan's method with him; and of his deep repentance and merciful restoration. C. "What did David pray for first of all?" P. "Mercy." C. "In the view of law, in what condition must a man be that needs to ask for mercy?" P. "Guilty." C. "Yes. To ask mercy is to admit guilt. Guilt must be acknowledged before God. He will hear no prayer that agrees not with truth. Have you observed the ground upon which David prays for mercy? Does he name the good he had aforetime done, and ask for mercy according to that?" P. "No. He says, 'according to Thy lovingkindness.'" C. "When showing mercy 'according to lovingkindness,' does God, think you, set righteousness altogether aside?" P. "No." C. "Your thought is true. The great Judge *must* be just:—first, a 'just God,' then 'a Saviour.' But how can this be?" P. "Through Jesus Christ."

Sunday, May 13th.—I was grieved to find that Price had been wasting time in composing a wretched *travestie* of Wesley's forty-eighth hymn. He had written:—

How blest is poor Sarah, bereft  
Of all that could trouble her mind!

Himself he described as:—

In love with the beautiful clay,  
And longing to lie in its stead.

I expressed strong displeasure at this affecting the feelings of a saint, in a case where he knew himself to have acted the part of that old murderer the devil.

Monday, May 21st.—C. "In our last interview, Price, I was obliged to speak strongly to you. You had been indulging your feelings altogether in a wrong direction. Spurious sentiment of that kind would soon have filled you with a false tenderness, not only diverse, but adverse to true brokenness of heart. Psalm li. has nothing in it like—

How blest is Uriah, bereft  
Of all that could trouble his mind!

It says,—what you ought to say,—'Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God!' Have you ever been concerned in any other murder?" P. "No." C. "Ah, Price, you have: and I also must plead guilty with you. Turn to Zech. xii., and read it." I expounded our having pierced God's Son, and showed that since in each of our lips the words were true,—

My sins have caused Thee, Lord, to bleed,  
Pointed the nail, and fix'd the thorn,—

the grief of a father pouring tears into the coffin of his son comes short of the bitterness we ought to feel on account of having first pierced that Holy One, and then neglected Him. As I spake, the spirit of weeping came on us both. For awhile I could not proceed, and streams ran down his face.

Saturday, June 2nd.—C. "Is there any portion of the New Testament that you wish me to explain?" He had turned down Romans x. When he came to, "They have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God," I asked, "Do you?" P. "I do." C. "If God should 'swear in His wrath that you should not enter into His rest,' would He do you any wrong?" P. "He would not." C. "You justify his sentence, then, even if it should pronounce your doom." P. "I do." C. "So far, you are right: you come over to God's side. Now read on." He read the vivid description commencing with these words, "The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise." I asked, "Do you believe?" P. "I try; but I am sorely troubled with bad thoughts." C. "As Paul teaches, let your mouth help your heart: 'Confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus.' Whose Son is He?" P. "The Son of God." C. "What has He done for sinners?" P. "Died for us." C. "If a thing be done *for* us—well done—all done—need we do it for ourselves?" P. "No." C. "Christ was made a curse *for* us. Are you content that His death should stand *for* you?" P. "I am." C. "It does, then, so stand. To manifest this, 'God hath raised Him from the dead.' Suppose you saw a bondsman put in prison for another's debt; and suppose, at three days' end, you saw the creditor procure the bondsman's release; what could that mean, but that he intended to urge his claim no further?" P. "I should so understand it." C. "Thus hath God, in the act of raising our surety from the grave, whither *for* us He went, given proof that He is well satisfied. Are you well satisfied?" P. "I am." C. "Say so then. Let your heart rest upon that death of God's Son for us: be thankful for it, and joyful in it."

"Tuesday, June 5th.—Observing dust on his knees, I asked, "How often do you pray?" P. "Every hour that I am awake, all through the day. Yet, for all that, I have been doing wrong." C. "What have you done?" P. "As I was not well, the doctor ordered me better food. The need for special consideration passed; and, accordingly, they brought me again the ordinary prison fare. The change back came upon me unexpectedly, and made me so angry that I refused the rations, and declared that I would eat no more. Since yesterday morning, I have not tasted. I see my conduct has been wrong, but what can I do? To eat now will involve my soul in the guilt of a lie." C. "Evil purposes, when the wrong of them is seen, are not to be persisted in, but repented of. Changes of mind, or of conduct in accordance with such changes, are not lies, where there has been no intent to deceive. Read Genesis xix. 2, 3: 'And the angels said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly, and they turned in to him.' Would

you say that those blessed angels lied?" P. "No." C. "Neither will you, if now, at my desire, you take food."

Saturday, June 9th.—We read again Romans x. Price declared his entire submission to God's righteous *condemnation* of him as a sinner. "But," I asked, "do you submit for God to *justify* you righteously? Do you believe in the Redeeming Son of God? Is your heart sure that He died for you?—and that the Father raised Him again for you?" P. "I do so believe, and my heart is sure of it." C. "What a glorious thought! you Price, in less than three months, through Jesus Christ, may be in heaven." P. "Sir, it will be so in less than ten weeks." I came away penetrated with thankfulness. The change in the man every officer and every fellow prisoner remarked.

Tuesday, June 19th.—P. "I have been much troubled since you were here." C. "What about?" P. "My crime. What if, after all, it should shut me out of heaven?" C. "Has Jesus undertaken for you?" P. "Yes." C. "Cannot you trust *Him*?" P. "I can, I will, I do." C. "If you trust Him, quietly leave all to Him. He will not swerve from His engagement. Set up His goodness against your badness. His crimson is stronger than yours, and will take out your last stain."

Having found that Price had been writing letters requesting postage stamps, Mr. Collins, jealous lest it might be some remnant of old acquisitiveness, strangely revived, asked him, for what reason he had done this. It turned out, that having no money, but yet anxiously desiring to give New Testaments to certain fellow prisoners with whom he had read the Bible, he had hit upon this expedient; and with the proceeds had, accordingly, made the necessary purchases. The best return he received was a very precious letter from the well-known and excellent Miss Marsh.

BEDDINGTON RECTORY, SURREY, S., *August 15th.*, 1860.

TO FRANCIS PRICE.

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter goes to my heart. *By God's grace* even you may meet your pious mother in glory. *Look to Jesus*. "His blood cleanseth from *all* sin." If you are willing to let Him save you, nothing *shall* hinder Him; nothing *can* hinder Him. *His purpose* in coming down to earth from heaven, and dying on the cross, was to save *you*. "He came into the world to save sinners." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of *all* acceptation;" worthy, therefore, of yours. Nay, we are told, He came to save "the chief" of sinners. Do you feel yourself lost? Then you are *just the man* He came to seek and to save. *He is come for you*. He, the Son of Man, says it Himself;—"Come to SEEK AND TO SAVE that which was LOST." He is pleading for you now with the Father. Do you think His Father can deny any-

thing to such a Son ; His only Son ; His Beloved One, who fulfilled His will by dying to save a world of sinners ?

Read Romans iii., and see there how *we all* are justified before God. "There is no difference." *There is but one way for us all.*

Whosoever breaks one commandment, thenceforth all the law is against him. From that moment he is *outside*, instead of *inside*. It matters little which way we broke outside ; *there we are*, and nothing but Christ's life, and death, and righteousness can save us. In Him is everlasting salvation. In Him is salvation free as the air we breathe.

Dear friend, a man in your circumstances once said, just as he was going into eternity, "*No man ever perished with his face toward Jesus Christ.*" That witness was true : for Jesus Christ, who is "THE TRUTH," said, "He that heareth My words, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is *passed from death unto life.*"

Do you desire deeper repentance ? Go to Jesus for repentance. That loving Saviour, who died for you, is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, that He may give repentance and remission of sins.

Look at Isa. xliii. 23, 24. After such a description of sins it might have been expected that a sentence cutting the people off for ever would have followed ; but no, the gracious conclusion is :—"I, even I, am He that *blotteth out* thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will *no more remember thy sins.*"

To the pardoning Saviour I now commend you. Take His own words with you until death ; ay, take them over death into eternity. "*Him that cometh unto Me I will IN NO WISE cast out.*"

Praying much for you, which, until your end, by the grace of God, I will not cease to do,

I am your sincere Friend,

CATHERINE MARSH.

Saturday, August 18th.—This evening the Governor kindly allowed Price to have in his cell a final interview with three youths, with whom he had been accustomed to read. He presented them with the New Testaments he had obtained, and within which he had written suitable inscriptions. Then, knowing their cases, gave them various counsels. One he urged to learn to read while he had present opportunity ; another he begged to give his heart to God without delay ; the third he besought to keep steadily the religious purposes which he had avowed. We prayed together. Once and again the young men embraced him. They literally wept upon his neck and kissed him. I think they can never forget that hour. The scene of their farewell was most affecting.

"Sunday, August 19th.—With two friends I stayed

with Price until eleven P.M. We sang, and prayed, and conversed about 1 Peter iv. 1, and Rom. viii. 3.

“Monday, August 20th.—The fatal day. I spent half-an-hour in the cell with Price alone, commending him to God in prayer. We went then to chapel, and partook of the Holy Communion. As we left the table to go to the room where he was to be pinioned, he spoke of his assured hope. To his executioner he presented a New Testament. Strong emotion shook him, but all his demeanour was becoming. Though full of thought, he was recollected, and took respectful leave of the Chaplain, the Governor, and all the other official persons. He went up trembling, but not shrinking; and, before he was turned off from the drop, was able so to recite his last confession, that it fell distinctly on the ears of the crowd below, and was heard with much feeling. It was in the following words:—

I confess, before heaven and earth, that I am guilty of the dreadful crime for which I am this hour to die. My sentence is just, and I have prayed for grace to receive it with submission; and I now earnestly request all who hear me to join me in the prayer, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Repenting of my sins, I have already trusted, and do now trust, in His most precious blood.

I ask forgiveness of all whom I have wronged in any way: if it were in my power, I would restore everything which I ever dishonestly took away.

Above all I ask forgiveness of the mother and family I have injured beyond repair.

From my heart I freely forgive any who have done me wrong. For those who may have helped to lead me astray I pray that they may be forgiven, even as I trust that God, for Christ’s sake, has forgiven me.

I wish to express my gratitude for the consideration and kind attention which I have received from the Governor and officers of the prison, from my spiritual advisers, and, also, from all Christian people who have remembered me in their prayers.

May my untimely end be a warning, especially to young people, against turning away from the counsel of godly parents, from the Bible and prayer, and from the merciful Saviour; and also against the indulgence of evil passions!

Lord, have mercy upon me! O Lamb of God, Son of the Father, Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me! Amen. Amen.”

In a farewell meeting, held at the close, which had now come, of Mr. Collins’s ministerial term at Leamington, he said:—“I entered upon my work in this town

with joy: I found a people willing to be led nearer to the Lord. Sharp trials have come upon me here, but in them I have ever been solaced by your sympathy and sustained by your prayers. Some have emigrated, others have died, a few have fallen, many removed; yet, after all, I leave more than a hundred additional in your fellowship. Ten years earlier than I came you invited me; perhaps our mutual wish was delayed by the all-wise, all-loving God, in order that I might be here when poor Price might receive from me those attentions which have been blessed to his salvation. God's mercy to that bloodstained man has been a great joy to me."

The strong, inflexible course of law, inexorably demanding the murderer's life, was, in Mr. Collins's judgment, not only one of scriptural authority, but also right in itself, and, in its frequent moral issue, most merciful to the criminal, Price, shut up for life among the rascals of a gaol, would, most likely, have become daily more abominable. Price, told, "*In ten weeks you must die,*" set himself to prepare. It is no unknown process of Divine mercy which provides that "destruction of the flesh" shall contribute to the spirit being saved in the day of the Lord.

The term spent in Leamington was one crowded with remarkable incidents full of interest for godly men. He has little music in his soul who cannot sing to another's harp, I need scarcely say that the revival marvels then occurring filled Mr. Collins with joy. In many Methodist churches the visits of Dr. and Mrs. Palmer, friends dear to him, had been as dew from the Lord. The Wesleyan Magazine for August, 1860, gives a beautiful specimen narrative of their success at Newcastle, endorsed by Robert Young and all the Ministers then upon that Circuit. Much intercession had been made, the vials containing prayers of saints were full of odours, before the visitors reached that town. Their simple, earnest, affectionate, urging of the duty of entire consecration sounded the heart-depths and stirred the conscience of many a sluggish professor. No placards were used, no puffing advertisements, no tricks. The work was orderly and solemn, but *grew* to dimensions that aroused public attention. Men of the world were

astonished, Christians rejoiced, scoffers awed, and all churches in the town multiplied.

Beyond the Tweed, Grant of Arndilly, Ratcliffe, and Reginald North, with others, evangelized, until cold Scotland blazed with fire. Humbler preachers, possessing little lore, and knowing no "orders" except Christ's own, "Go ye out," with much power laboured among England's outcasts. Ministers of front rank made theatres, concert rooms, and public halls ring with Gospel messages; while prelates and clergy turned out to do good among "roughs," and "costers," and "cabbies," in fashions as irregular as those of the despised itinerants of an earlier day.

In America stupendous miracles of grace were wrought. Surely never had revival so little of men and so much of prayer. The work waxed gloriously, yet no human names grew large. Spurgeon said, "Providence had sent Caughey, and Finney, and such wide-famed revivalists, *packing*, that honour might be given to the Lord alone."

The commencement of the great movement which swept over that continent, was very noiseless. J. C. Lanphier, a loving, devout man, was, in July, 1857, appointed a lay Missionary in the city of New York. Yearning for the salvation of souls, turning the lecture room of the old Dutch church into a closet, he daily wrestled there in solitary prayer for an outpouring of the Spirit. At length an idea struck him:—"Open the door; invite others to join you." Accordingly at twelve o'clock, on Wednesday, September 3rd, 1867, he did so. For thirty minutes no one came. He continued, as before, a lonely suppliant. After that time had elapsed, one entered the room; then another; then another; and so on. This was *the first* of the now world-famed Fulton Street prayer-meetings. During its earliest half hour it consisted of one person; and at its close only six were present to give "Amen" to its petitions. The influence descended richly, strengthened mightily, rolled on resistless as an advancing tide, until, as its result, leaving the gains of other communities untold, the Methodist Episcopal Church North, alone, *added in one year* one hundred and forty-six thousand to its membership.



The Rev. J. A. James, a loving watcher of such things, in the last address he ever gave to the Congregational Union, asks, "Are these things so? Is it a fact that great masses of men in the most intensely energetic nation upon earth have been simultaneously moved with a concern relating to God and their eternal interests?—that revival has penetrated not only the ordinary spheres of religion, but has made the voice of God to be heard in the busy scenes of trade, the colleges of learning, and the resorts of fashion; in the ships, the schools, and the very hotels?—that it has drawn hundreds of thousands, including men of all parties in politics and all denominations of religious faith,—even Unitarians, Papists, Jews, and Infidels,—into deep solicitude about salvation? If so, with what profound attention should the report of such a fact be heard! I regard this movement as a mighty work of God; a type of those glorious outpourings which shall herald the long-hoped-for millennium, and in which 'a nation shall be born at once.' "

Contemporaneously with these Transatlantic marvels, northern Ireland had, proportionally, an equal visitation.

In September, 1857, four young men, James M'Quilken, Robert Carlisle, J. Meneeley, and John Wallace, commenced in a little school-room near to Connor, county Antrim, what they called, a "believers' fellowship meeting." Their special object was, prayer that God would bless the preaching, the schools, the prayer-meetings, and all the evangelistic work then doing in that district. One kindred spirit after another joined the little band. Together they wrestled on; such a work resulted that all the nation now knows how they prevailed. The revival gave magistrates a holiday, ruined *shebeen* keepers, emptied prisons, stopped faction fights, reclaimed fallen women, filled Popish priests with rage, made fools of philosophers who would puzzle their brains to account for it all *minus* the Holy Ghost, and strangely set editors penning evangelical articles. A local poet said:—

O, think not the Lord has from Zion departed!  
O, think not the days of her glory are o'er!

That Victory's beam has that banner deserted,  
That flamed in the front of her battles of yore !  
Scarce nobler the trophies of conquest that crowned her,  
When march'd forth her armies on Pentecost's morn ;  
Scarce louder the shouts that then echo'd around her,  
Than now from yon green hills of Antrim are borne.

Wales also had its time of refreshing. From the rich records of its progress, I select two specimen incidents.

Morlais Castle is a place where meet, on fine Sunday mornings, the worst characters from all the surrounding iron works. They are accustomed to carry up beer in great quantities, and there drink and curse, play and fight, the Sabbath through. To this den of wickedness, one Sunday, in the June of 1859, twenty young converts, full of missionary zeal, wended their way. Scores of evil men were already gathered. But, despite the drunkard's scorn, and the blackguard's threat, the Scripture was opened, and a chapter read : a hymn was sung ; it sounded out melodiously in the fresh breeze of the morning. Serious concern settled on every spectator. Nor had the meeting commenced long, before many a rough face was bathed with tears. *The beer cans were turned over*, and the devil's camp fairly surrendered. Similar meetings were continued through the pleasant season, until Morlais ruins, rid of its ill fame, became the worshipping place of hundreds, and the birthplace of many.

In October of the same year, two young men came, from a neighbouring village, to work in the quarries of Festiniog. Their mates in toil observed them weep, but knew not why they wept. They were in distress of soul. Dinner briefly ended, the two climbed the hill, and on its quiet top began to pray. Some sounds of their pleading, borne down by the wind, fell on the ears of the workmen below. As if by irresistible impulse, the whole five hundred clambered after them, and joined them in prayer. In one short hour, men who that morning were sots and scoffers, were imploring mercy with loud cries and tears. The mountain became hallowed as Zion. That day and the next were spent in religious exercises upon its summit ; and a revival commenced that turned Merioneth to a garden of the Lord.

Prebendary Venn calculated that the addition to the various churches from the entire Welsh revival could not have been less than forty thousand souls.

Much objection was taken to the not infrequent bodily affections which accompanied the soul troubles of this period. The philosophy, however pretentious, must be shallow that cannot find solutions both physiological and psychological for such results, quite consistent with the genuine divinity and true religiousness of the work.

Adverting to these things, Merle d'Aubigne, remarked, "Such impressions on the bodily frame furnish no difficulty at all. A great divine told me how, forty years ago, when full alike of the strength and vigour, and also of the nervous quickness, of youth, a servant entered the room and, all unexpectedly, announced, 'Sir, your father is here!' That father had been absent beyond the sea for sixteen years; no message of return had been sent. The thrill of the sudden word seemed to empty the heart of its blood, and the hearer fell powerless to the ground."

Another eminent person says:—"I remember standing on the shore of the German Ocean, while, in a high storm, a vessel was trying to ride into harbour. Suddenly striking the angle of a jutting rock, the ship so recoiled and staggered that it seemed about to heel over. As suddenly did a mother by my side, whose son was in that ship, fall down in convulsions; and *nobody was surprised.*"

Dr. M'Cosh writes:—"At one part of my life it was my painful ministerial duty to go to many a poor woman who thought herself a sailor's wife, and let her know that indeed she was but a sailor's widow; for that her husband slept his final sleep beneath the waters of the Baltic Sea. The sad intelligence I laboured to intimate in the most gentle and delicate manner: but, however slowly, and with whatever preparation, when the awful truth burst on each mind at last, what scenes I had to witness! Some, not without desperate effort, kept outward calm, covering inward struggle. Some could neither shed a tear nor utter a cry; but seemed on the instant withered by the terrible word, as a tree is

by the lightning. Others wept, screamed, were convulsed, and, as to all bodily strength, became utterly prostrate."

Now what physiological difficulty is there in the effects during revival that did not occur in these cited cases?

It seemed in those blessed years as if a vial, not of wrath, but of mercy, had been poured in the air. In all probability not less than a quarter of a million of souls were then won to Christ. This vast result putting, if its proportions were maintained, a saved world within speedy reach, shocks the slow thought of some: it ought to confirm the faith of all. The record of such triumphs remains a proof of what God can, and a pledge of what God will, do. A saved world! and soon! Glorious idea! Why should we doubt? The work is not ours, but the Lord's. Beautifully does William Arthur say:—"If you or I desired to-morrow morning to awaken London at a certain hour, our utmost effort could only reach to a few chambers, call up only a few slumberers; but when the time appointed by Providence comes for bidding sleepers rise, He will pour light into every casement through all this city, will touch the eye of each individual sleeper as well as if he alone had been thought of, and *awake them all at once*. We think of national revival as if it were something too grand to be hoped; and surely it is, so long as we look to any power below the sky, of men, or books, or churches. Let us then turn our eyes away from all these, up, right up, and say, 'Lord, if *Thou* wilt, Thou canst!'"

## CHAPTER XVI.

### PONTYPOOL AND BRISTOL.

AT the removal time, Mrs. Collins, suffering from asthma, and troubled by erysipelas, was in no condition for travel. Depressed by departure from a loving people, and in sorrow at the necessity of leaving wife and daughter behind, Mr. Collins had once more to set forth to a new sphere of labour alone. The first Friday record at Pontypool, written under such discouraging circumstances, breathes his accustomed spirit of submissive faith. It says:—"Subject to the decision of Conference, I had pledged myself to the Deptford Circuit. Without my choice, nay, to some extent, against my remonstrance, I find myself in this place. The people receive me gladly. O Lord; I am engaged for Thee. I look to Thee alone. I renounce my own will. I believe in Thy Providence, and accept this as Thy appointment. Thou who hast brought me hither, doubtless hast some work for me to do here. Show me what it is, and with all my heart I will do it. I wait upon Thee. My soul doth wait. Come, Lord Jesus."

To his absent loved ones all Mr. Collins's communications were cheering:—"Do not hurry. I can manage very well until you are perfectly recovered. Absence is a mutual trial, but, as all others are, it shall be made to minister to our good. The Conference could scarcely have sent us among scenery more magnificent. The hills remind me of Sowerby Bridge, and the people, of Camborne. It is Cornwall and Yorkshire blent. At present, the dry pure air has suited me. Our house has a lawn in front, and a pleasant outlook; is built of stone, and looks well, but lacks room. My study is

exquisitely small, but hitherto, on shiny days, has been beautifully filled with sunbeams."

Mrs. Collins was able to rejoin her husband at Pontypool, on Wednesday, September 18th. An epistle to a friend, bearing date December 21st, 1860, conveys information—interesting in the domestic sphere—of entrance upon the new relation of grandpapa. It says:—"During my daughter's deep affliction, you so sympathized with our sorrow, that I cannot but let you share in her joy and ours. On Wednesday morning last she gladdened her husband by the gift of her firstborn child. Of its resemblances, its beauty, and its *altogether unparalleled* winning ways the usual rumours reach me. Thank God, mother and babe are both doing well."

As the chilly months came on, Mr. Collins—no longer, as of old, able to bear its severities—felt painfully conscious of the keen air of the hills; and was obliged—much to their grief—to let the Stewards know that the health of neither himself nor his wife would allow of their wintering in Pontypool again.

While visiting among his flock, Mr. Collins called upon a convalescent, just returned from Bath Infirmary. The man said, "Sir, my body is better, but my soul is worse. You see, I could get no privacy. In the room I went to, I happened on *a bad lot*; some of them were quite scoffers. When I knelt to pray, half the pillows in the ward were thrown at me. I did not like to complain to authorities, and I did not dare to continue visible devotion. I soon found that praying in bed, when I ought to be out on my knees, confessing Christ, rather chafed my conscience than brought me blessing. I have been a coward, and come home unhappy." After suitable dealing with this case, the pastor went on to the cottage of an aged pilgrim, who, with an odd fancy, when telling his Christian course, used the surface of his kitchen table as a map, and pointed to notch after notch, as illustrating the stages of his progress. Here was some Marah, with its bitter waters; there, an Elim, with its fountains and palms; this marked Calvary, where pardon was received; that, the wild desert spot where the demon was encountered and conquered. Mr. Collins fell in with the humour of the old man, knowing how

such quaint devices often profitably beguile a sufferer's lonely hours. He marked for him a further notch yet to be reached in that itinerary of the soul, a Tabor Mount where in prayer his spirit might be so possessed by indwelling God that the sinner should be transfigured to a saint, whose every outward act should gleam with purity and love. The man doubted not; for, in his chamber, Scripture study had made him strong. He aptly cited Heb. ix. 13, 14: "If the blood of bulls and of goats sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how *much more* shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" and then added for comparison Rom. v. 10: "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, *much more* being reconciled we shall be saved by His life." During many solitary musings the cumulative force expressed by the Apostle in the emphatic *much more* in each of those texts had been profitably revealed to him. Wise insight into God's Word is commoner in humble homes than some proud students think. Of many an aged heart it is the only solace. It is fed upon morning, noon, and night. To a poor almswoman Mr. Collins said, "What part of God's Word do you love the most?" And was struck with the appreciative, intelligent, earnest reply:—"Those glorious Epistles!"

"Sunday, January 13th, 1861.—I commenced special services at Abersychan. I rose early each morning to seek from the Lord a blessing on the day. While so engaged, my heart was made tender. Weather thinned our congregations, yet the power of God was among us. Some were saved, and others graciously filled with the Spirit.

"Sunday, February 17th.—I preached morning and evening at Loughborough, and baptized dear Emmy's babe. I was much affected in the service. How marvellous is the loving kindness of the Lord! May I and all belonging to me live to His glory!"

As Mr. Collins returned home, a young man seated himself by his side, a specimen of those loose fellows who, now and then, by their allegiance and praise, disgrace each denomination in turn. "Are you a Minister?" "Yes." "Of what sort?" "A Wesleyan." "O, a

Wesleyan. I don't believe in them. I am a Baptist." The odours of the forward youth's breath sufficiently explained his impertinence, and gave evidence he little thought of, that whatever love he might have for water in the baptistery, for internal application he preferred something stronger in the glass. "I have answered your question," said Mr. Collins; "allow me to ask you one." Expecting a puzzler in the polemics of the font, he replied, "Well, Sir, I have no books with me. You may set me fast. But whatever you have to say I will lay before my Minister, and he would answer *the whole Conference* of you." "My question can be answered without help of either book or Minister. Is it whiskey ro gin that you have been imbibing so early this morning?" "You are all out," he replied. "It was neither; it was rum." "Well, young man, think well of what I now say: the habit of dram-drinking is one of the devil's strongest fetters. Do not let him slip it over you. You are in great danger. Take care lest you sip yourself to poverty, your character to shame, and your soul to hell."

"March 5th.—The shout of a King is among us. More than a hundred have just recently given their hearts to God. I admitted thirty into Society last Lord's day. Yet it requires nearly all simply to maintain numbers. Trade is so depressed that scores are leaving the neighbourhood. Eight blast furnaces have ceased work, throwing out of employ three or four hundred people at once."

To a friend, a farmer, just bereaved, Mr. Collins wrote thus characteristically. March 26th, 1861:—"Ours is not all mourning and tears. I will sing with you 'Harvest Home.' That field you sowed, and fenced, and for thirty years have weeded and watched; out of it—happy thought!—the devil never had a harvest; the growth has been full; it has ripened early and well: it is now cut, carried, and garnered with God. Harvest home! Let her mother sing 'Harvest home!' Tell her that with that dear child she did not travail in vain; did not give her the breast in vain; or teach her so many good and useful things in vain. Let each of your family sing 'Harvest home!' Tell my young friends that in each of their



hearts too the great Husbandman sees a field and looks for fruit. May they all be cleaned, and filled, and fenced, and kept, and finally be joyfully added to the Lord's harvest, as their sister has been! Attendance on departing saints is hallowing. Having been with your child under the Portico of Eternity has, I dare say, made you love the beauty of holiness more. My brother, she has gone before; has joined the adorable Forerunner; represents your family in heaven; in due time you will see her again among those who will receive and welcome you to 'everlasting habitations.'"

Another letter written about this time to a candidate for the ministry says:—"Thirst for godly knowledge. Store your mind with Scripture. Form the habit of writing all texts out in full in your pulpit preparations. Not doing so is a source of much inaccuracy. Get the citations you think needful firmly into your memory. Give them deliberately and correctly. Let there be no 'so ons' and 'so forths.' Cultivate your taste. Remember that society is, like the living creatures, 'full of eyes within and without.' Seek increase of conversational power. It is sad to fill time uttering by the hour such trite and common things as drop from the lips of people who never think. Fulness of knowledge, vigilance of opportunity, and versatility are necessary to make talk profitable, and to make it permanently reach a high level. In the esteem of Christian brethren you will rise, if there be solid value in their habitual communications. Keep your mind with God all day. Nothing equals that for giving both sweetness and elevation to all your thoughts and modes of expression."

"Thursday, May 16th.—I preached in King Street, Bristol; but, having spent so many previous hours in the District Meeting, did not feel as much enjoyment and liberty as upon ordinary occasions I do. My mind has not the ability, as some have, of working easily upon different lines in the same day. Business left me weak and unready for the pulpit. Meeting so many of my brethren has refreshed my spirit. The power of religion is certainly strengthening in the Ministers. After blessed seasons and mighty prayers we have parted with much and growing love.

A letter to a young friend, dated June 17th, says :—  
 ‘We elder men must retire before you of recent birth. How soon the hour will arrive when you also will have to say the same! Work while it is day. That you may work, pray. When I flag in labour, I betake myself to prayer. That *always* revives me. So I keep up, and so I keep on. I have taken to the streets of late. Four times I have blown the Lord’s trumpet in the marketplace of Pontypool. At Blaenavon, Varteg, Abersychan, and Garndyfaith, I have also held outdoor services.”

“June 22nd.—Letters from Mr. Broadbent tell that, after careful examination, Emmy’s medical adviser pronounces that her lungs are seriously diseased; that her sufferings may be alleviated, but her recovery must not be looked for. The way in which, in her previous affliction, the Lord heard me, much prepared for meekness and submission now. These are solemn tidings; they seem to dig a grave across our path. Well, heaven shines beyond it.”

A letter to his invalid child, dated July 16th, furnishes interesting information :—“Last Lord’s day I opened a chapel at Gilwerne, in the Abergavenny Circuit. Maria and Aunt Maria accompanied me. It is not possible to tell you how beautiful the country there really is. Many hills, the Sugar Loaf, the Skerrits, and the Blue Range, stand grandly round. We met, and were much interested by, Mr. G., a superintendent of railway works. The duties of his calling had led him to spend many years in Spain. His narratives of Spaniards athirst for truth were very cheering. By his means the well-known Protestant tract called ‘Andrew Dunn’ had been translated and widely distributed. He knew Matamoros and several others of those who, with him, are at present witnesses in bonds. Some Spaniards are ashamed of their national bigotry, but not all. One thus retaliated the charge :—‘Good! An Englishman talking of intolerance! A man of a nation gloomy as its sky; a nation that locks up theatres on a Sunday, and would persecute an organ-grinder for filling the air with music!’ On its being urged that the sanctity of the Lord’s day rested upon authority scriptural, binding alike upon Spain and England; though proud to call himself a Catholic, the

man pooh! poohed! the Bible as vigorously as if he had been an infidel. It was then observed that our Sabbath customs and their religious intolerance differed thus: whatever a man's likings for such things might be, *there could be no conscience requiring him to go to the theatre upon a certain day; or to make a noise, which not everybody called music, just then, in the streets; that if he were a visitor among a people to whom, during certain hours, doing such things would be a grief, politeness, if he had any, without need of a higher principle, would lead him to defer, for that brief space, his personal gratification: that restraint, so limited, differs fundamentally from the Inquisition, with its history of blood and fire, and no way resembles the fetters on thought, and prisons for Bible-readers, which deservedly cause to be ranked with bigots of the dark ages, the present tyrannical administrators of Spain.*"

On the way to Conference Mr. Collins called first to preach among his friends at Leamington, and next hastened to his much loved, slowly sinking daughter at Loughborough. From her he went on to Newcastle. A letter from thence to me says:—"My host, Mr. Southern, knew and had affection for me in the Durham Circuit. God, since then, has blessed him in temporal things. He has a good house, and entertains five of us. Beside myself there are President Rattenbury, Theophilus Woolmer, Gervase Smith, and Jacob Morton. This company is very pleasant. Conversation never flags. The President is full of devotion; while the younger brethren unite good store of information with such wealth of quaint tales, that they would let nobody be dull. During the crowded services of the open Conference I quietly stayed in my chamber, asking a blessing on the President, and while doing so was filled with Divine delight."

To his wife Mr. Collins wrote:—"About our appointment neither distress yourself nor be afraid. The Lord takes care of us." Return of post brought to him so trustful a response, that he replied, "You speak nobly; *just as in past years you have ever done.*" At a later stage he said to Miss Graham, "Bristol is named for me. I expect to go. My representative is President.

I lodge with him : so you see, for once, I am near the ear of authority and the arm of power."

On Sunday, July 28th, Mr. Collins opened a new chapel in the Hexham Circuit. Many friends of those early days, when his ministry began at Wark, were there. He says:—"I could not but praise that God who has kept me through thirty years of public life. How many have not been permitted to labour so long!"

On Friday, August 2nd, there was a touching scene in Conference. Thomas Jackson—then seventy-eight—retired from the Theological Chair. His reminiscences were very interesting. He told how he was converted at seventeen; and sent—without passing either District Meeting or Conference—early into the work; that he set forth to his Circuit with just one *crack* sermon, which subsequent study had shown him to be, *like many other crack sermons*, founded upon a misunderstanding of the text. His statements of experience were blessed testimonies, full of exultation. At the close of his address a suitable resolution was read; then Dr. Osborn, Benjamin Gregory, and J. H. Rigg spoke excellently well upon it; next the Conference, all standing, accepted it. The good father, comely and venerable, again stood up, and responded in a manner most infectiously joyous. It was the wisdom of a sage gushing from the heart of a child. The lessons of long experience never have dimmed the eye of his hope. All past blessings upon our Connexion were, in his belief, but preludes. He thought, and made his hearers think, that in its course of triumphant good, Methodism was but just beginning.

On Monday, August 5th, the Conference was saddened as the President read a communication, giving information of the death of Samuel Jackson. It was affecting that this should occur the self-same week in which the weight of numerous years compelled his elder brother to resign the post of active service, where for more than half a century he had so nobly stood, and, by the grace of God, never been found wanting. Thus, as one brother sat down from his work, the other went up to his throne. Samuel Jackson was a brave, shrewd, practical, weighty man; seldom matched for vigour of mind, integrity of character, and strong, racy, Saxon speech. One idea

—*the children for Christ*—possessed him, and became thenceforth the vital centre of his work. The youth of Methodism never had such a friend, such a pleader for their interests, before; to this day this Elijah's mantle waits for its Elisha. Not given to much speaking, among his peers he oft was silent,—oft shrank into himself; but, without fail, lit up—dear old man—whenever the little ones came in sight. Shortly before his departure, as he lay very still, with a look that bespoke profound meditation, his daughter asked, “Father, are you specially thinking?” “Yes, said he.” “Of what?” “*Of the children!*” was his reply. Thus beautifully his great life-thought was his last thought.

When Conference closed, Mr. Collins's appointment proved, as he expected, to be Bristol South. It is edifying to observe how, entering upon this *last* sphere of his busy ministry, he set himself as carefully to meditate its duties, and to surrender himself wholly up to God for help in the performance of them, as ever he had done in the fresh zeal of his youth. The first Friday record, bearing date September 6th, 1861, says:—“I am brought hither by God. Now, as aforetime, the Lord hath chosen my inheritance for me. His lovingkindness is unsearchable. Blessings come upon us in showers. The friends have received us with affection. The home is comfortable, and apparently suitable for our health. The members are respectful, looking for good, and willing to work. About me lies a large population, easily reached. The corn awaits the sickle all around. Through life I have found that each successive appointment has opened before me *some specialty* of duty: what form it will take here, time will show. Whatever it may be, to fit me for it, I this day yield myself to God. Soberly, as befits my years, and aided by all the lessons of past experience, I set myself to seek a closer walk with God. I desire to be filled with the Spirit of power: and with fixed purpose determine to addict myself altogether to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.”

In some near slum in Bristol there dwelt one of those whose blotted names may not be written; “a woman in the city, which was a sinner.” All joy had faded from the wanton's path. There she was in miserable poverty, sad,

and sick. Mr. Collins's was pity that sin never drove from a sufferer's door. So soon, therefore, as the case was brought before him, he visited the forsaken one. Light—the faint lingering gleam of early teaching—was in her mind; but callousness—the result of long-cherished filthiness—was on her heart. Life was ebbing fast. Penniless, and all-degraded as she was, yet her soul to him seemed precious as a queen's; and had, from him, no less of prayer, and care, and tears. We cannot send the memory of this poor nameless waif back again into the dark without adding that her end was brightened with hope.

In this last appointment, as in preceding ones, Mr. Collins's ever-busy beneficence was well kept up. Now, I find him discovering on a road a Christian brother in a rag-gatherer; rejoicing in his simple witness of a Saviour's love; sending him singing on his way gladdened by gracious words. Then, putting himself, for a little sunny walk, side by side with a cheerful, but tottering, poor old man of eighty-one, who said, "Thank God, I have my wits and my limbs; I never was in a prison, and *I am not going to hell. I am the Lord's.* So, while I see everybody in this busy world looking keenly, as they do, after their own, *the sight helps me to believe*, and I am comforted in the faith, *that Jesus is looking after me*, and He will take me soon." Next, I see him with patient charity teaching blind people to read. While doing so one day, as sentence after sentence of sweet promise revealed itself to the scholar's touch, the man suddenly exclaimed, "O, this Bible is a treasure. Thank you, Sir, thank you much, and thank God more; for I can now, for myself, in these holy words, *feel the way to heaven with my finger tips!*" That ecstatic saying well repaid the trouble of many a weary lesson.

A letter of this time says:—"To proclaim the duty and privilege of the perfect love of God has become a passion with me. I love to 'talk of His power' as a Sanctifier. Some here have felt it. They are my glory and crown. Others desire the thing, but demur to pay the price. Worldly fashions have strong sway here. I hate this evil, and smite at it, but with small success. It is gradually introducing caste into the family of God. Caste suits a theatre, but is abhorrent in a sanctuary.

It is surely out of place in His Presence, before whose Majesty all are dust alike, or in the embrace of whose love all are children alike."

"Friday, October 4th.—I rose at three, and spent an hour with my Master."

"Friday, November 15th.—My Superintendent being ill, more than usual is needed from me. I rose at four, to seek the Lord. In this Circuit I discern in the young people much levity, and see in the congregations much finery. On every hand abounding departures from the simplicity that is in Christ grieve and embarrass me. Hitherto my rebukes have not only borne little fruit, but have provoked much opposition. My present concern is how next and *how best* to assail these evils. I strive to exercise—and to urge others to exercise—faith for a visitation of the Spirit. I need 'the Spirit of counsel and might.' May He strengthen me that I do valiantly! may He guide me that I do discreetly! Jesus—John xvi. 7—says, 'If I depart, I will send Him unto you.' On that promised mission of the Holy Ghost I rely. O Lord Christ, I long to bring souls to Thee. Send down the Holy Ghost. Send Him. Let Him my helper be. Thou, in various places, art helping others; Thou, of old, hast helped me. Lord, help me still, and help me now."

"Friday, November 22nd.—About three I began to commune with the Lord. I was much refreshed in reading Proverbs viii. and ix. New light shone from every verse. My heart was touched and humbled, yet encouraged. Feeling my need of instruction, I, there and then, entered myself anew as a student in the college of wisdom. Unspeakable sweetness flowed into my soul while, beholding Jesus revealed in that Word as 'the Wisdom of God,' I was enabled to see Him, and to accept Him, as 'unto me Wisdom.'"

The result of so much foregoing thought and prayer was manifested in a remarkable address delivered on Monday, November 25th, at a tea-meeting consisting of members of Society only. It was a vigorous maintenance of old Wesleyan teaching concerning the impropriety of adorning the person with gold. Mr. Collins remarked :—"This evil spreads like leprosy. Wherever

I go, I see its growing prevalence. To keep my own conscience clear, I must rebuke it." The following is a *breviate* of his argument against such adorning:—

"*It is unnatural.* The Creator hath given to each creature its adorning in itself. None borrows from another. There is no plagiarism of beauty. Each form hath *its own* symmetry; each flower *its own* loveliness.

"*It is unnecessary.* Beads, and stones, and metals neither satisfy the mind nor bring any benefit to the body.

"*It is unworthy.* To us, marred by sin, is proffered 'the beauty of the Lord our God to be upon us.' Too often, in this fashion-following age, the toilet robs the closet; clothes get more thought than character; feather and flower, trinket and gem, divide the heart with Christ: thus, 'the image of God' is declined for the 'admiration of men.'

"*At your homes,* the pastor, when he calls, must wait until—despite his exhortation, Paul's words, Peter's texts, and Wesley's warnings—Babylonish array, the very grief of his heart, has been donned.

"*In the schools,* stones and gold on the teachers are copied in gilt and glass in the scholars; and, year by year, betrayed by love of finery, wrecked virtue falls from those maiden ranks into the mire.

"*To the table of the Lord* many come with garlanded brow to commemorate Him whose crown was of thorns; and, *unfitly*, stretch forth a jewelled hand to receive His sign whose hands the nails did tear.

"*Fashion clips charity.* Shallow purses cannot bear the cost of both. Self-denial in this matter alone might make every church treasury overflow. Dark neighbourhoods could be illumined, and whole nations of Pagans evangelized, by the cost of professors' finery.

"*It is an evil, heedlessly, to get isolated from a glorious past.* Would one only acquainted with Methodism by the writings of its founder, the records of its history, and the biographies of its saints, know people glistening with gold to be its adherents?

"*The world's applause of present more liberal views is doubtful praise.* Does it mean that we have a less pervading, less controlling conscientiousness? If so, I fear



it accounts for acknowledged dwarfishness in spiritual stature, and for the uncommonness of the experience of perfect love. It was Laodicea, among the early churches, that with multiplied adornment flaunted forth, 'I am rich.' But Jesus saw spiritual poverty beneath all that wealth of the jeweller, and, in pity, counselled her, 'Buy of Me gold tried in the fire.' Alas! Laodicean finery and Laodicean feebleness still go together. Less careful of precept than our fathers, we find ourselves in the same degree less able to exercise faith in promise than they. Primitive assemblies might lack refinement, but in them faith, and hope, and love, and simple piety abounded."

Soon after giving this address, Mr. Collins wrote in a lady's album:—

The rainbow needs no tint,  
And no perfume the rose;  
On woman's lovely countenance  
'Tis God the gift bestows.  
Adorning after Him  
Does no delight impart,  
But oft indexes on the face  
A weak and restless heart.  
Would you abhor to hear,  
From pulpits, playhouse lies?  
Bring not the gaudy theatre  
Before the preacher's eyes.  
Who "dwells alone" in God,  
Will on the world look down;  
Meekness, and Truth, and Christ will have  
For ornament and crown.

As Mr. Collins made conscience of "not allowing himself in any known sin," so he equally showed love by not suffering it unrebuked in others. Worldliness was his great dread. It seemed to him coming up over the Church like that ever-encroaching drift of the desert which daily narrows the fertile fields of Egypt. As he saw things, worldly conformity was the present, pressing peril. Against that, therefore, he sternly set himself with hostility that knew no compromise. The evil thing being voted a trifle, or having grown into custom, no way conciliated him. Hence the directness of his attack on all departures from the simplicity of appearance and of

manners which John Wesley recommended and loved. "Pooh! Pooh!" was not an answer that could stay for one moment the action of Mr. Collins's earnest soul. He saw this "*pride of the eye*" blighting early piety, weaning young hearts from communion with God, and wiling them astray into the ways of the world. To him such things seemed momentous and terrible.

In Brazil there grows a common plant which forest dwellers call the Matador, or Murderer. Its slender stem creeps at first along the ground; but no sooner does it meet a vigorous tree than, with clinging grasp, it cleaves to it and climbs; and, as it climbs, keeps, at short intervals, sending out armlike tendrils that embrace the tree. As the murderer ascends, these ligatures grow larger and clasp tighter. Up, up, it climbs, a hundred feet, nay, two hundred, if need be, until the last loftiest spire is gained and fettered. Then, as if in triumph, the parasite shoots a huge, flowery head above the strangled summit; and thence, from the dead tree's crown, scatters its seed, to do again the work of death.

Even thus, worldliness has strangled more churches than ever persecution broke. Mr. Collins's heart ached when in chain and ring, bracelet and brooch, garland and plume, he thought he saw this murderer—more fatal to trees in the garden of God than is the Matador to the forestry of Brazil—insidiously twining round the Societies committed to his care.

Fox, Fletcher, Wesley, Bramwell, ay, and if any find authority in venerable names, I may go earlier and say, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Cyprian, the martyr of Carthage, each was pained, and each, in his day, found, like Isaiah, a "burden of the Lord" against "the bravery of ornaments, the round tires like the moon, the mufflers, the mantles, the wimples, and the crisping pins." But spite of them all, Apostles and Prophets, Fathers, and Martyrs, Quaker witnesses and Methodist worthies, there are still daughters of Zion that are haughty; who, as the Scripture says, walk "mincing as they go."

Mr. Collins feared that things waxed worse. I am not sure of that. Saints weeping the errors of their age seldom see it fairly through their tears. However, when a

watcher so prayerful and so vigilant utters a warning, it deserves good heed. In this Litany all may unite:—"From worldliness,—that mildew of churches,—good Lord deliver us."

It is due, because true, to say that by Mr. Collins this subject was undertaken, not with a censor's pride, but borne as a prophet's burden. In the message to a friend, accompanying the gift of a copy of his address, he says, "I am, you see, employed in *the hard service* of rebuke. Smiting wicked aliens I can do without compunction, but reproving within the Lord's family is *intensely painful* to me. I kept silence as long as I dared. At length my Father's face was getting hidden from me. I followed hard after God. I almost lived in my closet, but I could not get nigh. It would not do. Nothing would do but speaking plainly out according to the light given. I have now done so. None have sent me a vote of thanks. But my conscience is at peace, the way heavenward is cleared, and, best of all, my Father smiles."

To one that ventured to suggest that what he had done might be accepted as once for all; and that, having printed his testimony, he might by future silence dwell in greater quiet, and, innocently, find a smoother path; his reply was, "Few now bear this witness. It lies very much upon me. It seems committed to me. Though I lift up my voice with fear and trembling, though giving this testimony almost prostrates me, it is my duty. If, ashamed, I neglected to say the thing for God which He shows me that the present times require, all business between me and Heaven would be suspended. This evil in our respectable families leads more lambs from the fold, hinders more aggressive work, and keeps more souls in a low dying state than any other thing I know. Sir," he added, with unspeakable solemnity, and with tears trembling in his eyes, "*the work is a crucifixion to me: but, do it I must—I must—or I could not look my Father in the face.*"

Justice to the Societies among whom Mr. Collins laboured requires us to say that though some, at first thought his warnings personal and intrusive, further acquaintance with his unaffected love, singular excel-

lence, and transparent rectitude, won their affection even when it did not compel their obedience.

About this time some reason led Mr. Collins to hear a sermon in a neighbouring church. The ritual was ornate. The exposition,—well, those who choose to consult the *Catena Aurea* of Aquinas may find high-sounding patristic names to endorse it; or, if they will come lower, Benjamin Keach will stand sponsor for it. It would have been ingenious if original. But if university men be permitted so to let fancy run riot, preachers fresh from lapstone, field or forge, if, perchance, they do the same, surely, should be less despised. The subject was “the good Samaritan.” Jerusalem was heaven; Jericho, hell. Man’s fall was the journey down. The thieves who met, stript, wounded, and left the man half dead, were Satan and his angels. The priest and the Levite were Moses, with his “Do this, and live:” and Aaron with his rites and types: they passed by but helped not. The good Samaritan was Jesus: the oil was the Spirit He gives; the wine, His “precious blood.” Putting the man on his own beast, was Christ humbling Himself to exalt us. The inn was the Church. The direction to the innkeeper, Christ’s commission and charge to His Ministers. The two pence were the two testaments. The promised reward at the Samaritan’s return, the glory which, at His coming, the Lord will give to faithful Ministers.

On Saturday, December 14th, 1861, Prince Albert died. On the day of funeral Mr. Collins took occasion to preach. His sermon was very appropriate. The statement of the circumstances was well expressed, and the eulogium sober and discriminating. He says:—

How unexpectedly by the death of the Prince has the usual season of our festivity been filled with mourning. The Queen is a widow. The royal children are fatherless. The whole country is in grief. The case is very admonitory. It would be culpably thoughtless to allow such a time to pass unmarked by suitable reflections.

If rank, and affluence, and a good constitution, and a regular life, and years not far beyond the limit of early manhood could have given security, Death’s shaft had not smitten him. If virtues, and accomplishments, and the claims of a numerous family, and the needs of a vast empire could have held him, he had still been here. If the help of attendants, and the skill of physicians, and the assiduities of love could have averted death, the Prince had been living now.

The Prince has been a blessing in the land. Unusually prudent, he walked safely in a path where many would have stumbled. Standing on the steps of the throne, he helped without hiding its occupant. He did not mischievously intrude himself at any time. No party could claim him, though all were indebted to him. Without either the power of a king, or the freedom for independent action of a peer, he has eclipsed peers, and, as Albert the good, has left a name matched by few of our noblest kings. He considered the poor. He encouraged agriculture. He fostered art. He laboured to promote the harmony of classes. He was a genuine man; in spirit, devout; in creed, Protestant; in morality, a model. Always a praise to them that did well, he was, also, if not, by office, a terror, yet, by life, a reproof, to evil-doers.

This stroke has come upon us suddenly. Many of us knew not of his illness. The first word that fell upon our ears, blighting many hopes, was this,—“The Prince is dead.”

The loss has come just when his experience was ripe; just when his plans for public good were in progress; just when the education of his children needed his supervision; just when the nations could worst spare from their councils so peaceful, influential, and wise a man.

In living memory no such sadness has ever touched the heart of Britain. Zech. xii. 11 predicts that the mourning before Israel's restoration shall be bitter “as the mourning of Hadad Rimmon in the valley of Megiddon,” when Judah wept Josiah slain. May Britain's tears for her lost Prince and with her smitten Queen be to her, also, the type and commencement of a national repentance! O Lord, pour upon the house of Victoria, and upon the inhabitants of England, the Spirit of grace and of supplications! May we all look unto Thee, pierced for our sins and mourn! Thus may this day of sorrow be sanctified to our country's good!

In a Christmas letter to his much loved, daily drooping, daughter Emily, Mr. Collins says:—

This morning, December 25th, while I set forth God's ‘unspeakable gift’ a poor stricken sinner cried out so vehemently that I was obliged to stop awhile and leave him way. To-night my theme has been Mary's faith and joy. I have spoken of—

I. Her usual creed: “God my Saviour.”

II. Her special believing act: “My soul doth magnify the Lord.” Consider;—she accepted as true, and in that trust magnified the Lord, despite—

1. The apparent impossibility of the thing: “A virgin shall conceive.”

2. The risk to her character; unmarried, yet a mother.

3. The unparalleled wonder of the fact: The Eternal born; Immanuel; God with us.

My child, in the darkness the Lord well light up your candle with exceeding joy. You know Mary's God; follow her unhesitating faith; imitate her submission; emulate her spirit of praise. In daily weakness remember:—

Thee the Eternal God sustains,  
Thy Maker and thy Friend.

Christ is your life. Keep on thinking so, saying so, feeling so. Ever magnify the Lord, Emmy, do. Seek perfect subordination. You, my child, know my plan of standing up for God in all things. It is too common to dwell only upon what is sad. By affliction we ought to be sobered; but we, who believe the Gospel and stand with God, may so take broader, brighter, views, that we shall not be distressed. As we see His hand uplifted, let us not flee from Him, but close, and closer, let us cleave to His beloved embrace. The proof of self conquered is the soul's power habitually to say, "Good is the will of the Lord: good, acceptable, and perfect."

"Friday, March 14th.—I gave thanks for the revivals that are in progress all around. At Wedmore an infidel recanted his creed, and burnt his books; at Axbridge the day-school teacher had to stop his lesson to let the children pray: at Hanham thieves and harlots have been saved. Wonders of grace have been done in Midsomer-Norton, Banwell, and Abergavenny, and Blaina.

"Thursday, May 29th.—Went to Müller's House at Ashley Down. There eleven hundred orphans are maintained and trained in the fear of the Lord. What a work! At sight of it I was both amazed and humbled. By the side of that God-honoured man I felt ashamed. I abhorred myself for my fruitlessness, and adored the Lord for His mighty acts. The word of my heart was, 'Lord' what wouldst Thou have me to do?"

A letter, dated June 13th, adverts well to national troubles then pressing:—"These are days in which we ought to pray exceedingly. How dreadful this fratricidal war in America, and this stagnating cotton famine in England! America and England, the lands of clearest Gospel light, are to God as His Israel now. Therefore are their sins sorely visited. His knife is sharp. Blood and hunger cut deep. America has been proud of territory and of population: her unity is threatened, and her sons are slain. England has boasted of wealth, and, behold, the cry of her poor reaches to heaven. The sorrow may become bitterer still. God hath not yet touched our cattle or corn, or let the pestilence loose. May we repent, and may the Lord be merciful!"

A letter to a young Minister, dated August 27th, says:

“Make as full a day for God as you were accustomed to do for man. Read carefully. Make what you read thoroughly your own. Have a book always in use for analysis, reviews, and extracts. Stick close to Wesley’s writings; he wrote, as I would have you live, for God and for souls. Do not at present spend much money upon books. Our standard works may generally be borrowed from libraries in the Circuit. Riper experience, and more learning than you have yet, are necessary to the wise and economical purchasing of books. Work hard, very hard, at your Bible. Write your preparations with prayer and care. Sermons short, and strong, and well steeped in the water of life, are the sort you want. Be loving, simple, and studious. Do not listen to recitals of faults of the absent. Specially frown down ill tales of your predecessor. People who love to talk disrespectfully about other Ministers, will in turn speak in the same way about you. If any will persist to speak thus, call upon them to engage in prayer for the erring party. Scripture read the first thing in a house will suggest good themes for conversation, and give savour to all your further communications. Learn ‘The twelve Rules of a Helper,’ and keep them. Often, in secret, renew your covenant with God, and never live lower than perfect love.”

Mr. Collins threw few chances of usefulness away: thus, I find note how two Local Preachers were guided into perfect love by a conversation carried on amid the busy hum of a bazaar. When was he without a word in season? “Sir,” said one he visited, “I hope to be saved at last.” “It would be better, friend,” was the reply, “to be saved at first: so let us go down upon our knees and seek the blessing now.”

“What talents have I?” asked a desponding lady. “Well, at all events, two: leisure and God’s Word: time and truth. Let them be well used, and your crown will be bright.”

“Sin is so ruinous,” observed another, “I cannot be happy: it makes me afraid.” To this Mr. Collins returned, “My brother, sin is not a whit better than you think of it. It is destructive to the soul as arsenic is deadly to the body. But does alarm of arsenic keep you from

enjoying daily food? No! For, you truly argue, though arsenic is bad,—seeing that I shall not take it,—it will not hurt me. So say I. Sin is bad, but—Jesus strengthening me—I will not do it. Against poison, whether bodily or spiritual, I will be upon my guard; but neither the one nor the other shall involve me in the terror of perpetual dread, or lower my life into a perennial misery.”

Of a young Local Preacher he inquired, “Have you family prayer at your lodgings?” The answer was, “We are not to throw our pearls before swine: so I have never proposed it.” His reply was, “Be ashamed if *you have chosen* a hogstye for your home, and more ashamed if you have vilified your home without reason. Evade duty no longer. Offer to do it this very night. If the offer be refused, find a better place. Never *willingly* pitch your tent where you may not build your altar.”

An invalid he found thankfully mindful of intervals of ease, but doubtful of God’s mighty mercy in Jesus. “Thomas,” said he, “suppose I plunged into the Severn to save you from drowning; got you out,—led you home; and at parting, on your door step, gave you a lozenge. What would rise to your mind ever after when you thought of me? The lozenge! the lozenge!” “O no, Sir! the rescue!” “Well, let it be so concerning Jesus. You tell me of just one of His little gifts. Speak—as Paul did—of His dying love. Say, ‘He loved me and gave Himself for me.’ Think of that, till it sets your soul on fire; think of that, till a passion for Him swells within you.”

Frequent labours of visitation brought Mr. Collins in contact with some peculiar cases. The softening brain of one dear old saint had become possessed by a singularly happy monomania. To her every day was Sunday. The little left of life was to be all worship. The only trouble the pleasant delusion caused was that her daughter was obliged to clean the cottage early, and on the sly; for pails, scrubbing brushes, and mops, seemed awful improprieties to her ever Sabbath-keeping mother. Another aged woman had gone blind: she became the subject of a beautiful illusion. “All,” said she, “around is dark. I see nothing there: but when I lo right up



towards heaven, for months past, I have always seen the letter W printed as if in pearls : I know what it means. *I am going soon, and it means WELCOME.*"

I will here, as seems most fitting, briefly summarize what, from various sources, I find to have been the impressions made by Mr. Collins's course of labour at Bristol; leaving entirely to the next and final chapter to tell how his work there, and, indeed, his active ministry, was by a sudden stroke of illness brought prematurely to its close.

His appointment to Bristol was preceded by much curiosity of expectation. The reports which had reached the people concerning him were various and conflicting. There could not long be doubt. The first sermon showed what manner of man he was.

Many in the Church were startled, and some offended, by the bold and direct reproof with which at once he smote worldliness and apathy; whilst such as had been waiting in hope of full salvation were gladdened by the clear, strong, way in which all the privileges of holiness were set before them.

His style, biblical in spirit and idiom, attracted the devout; always accurate, often elegant, it pleased the educated; terse and simple, it suited the busy; frequently illustrative, sometimes quaint, now lit up with humour, then piercing with the probe of wit, it fixed the attention of the careless; laden with truth, pungent in appeal, replete with unction, his discourses were words of life to many.

His originality was uncommon. People, well read in theology, know, nor do they think it any blame to find it so, that the gist and ground-work of ordinary homilies may be found in standard commentaries, or the writings of previous divines upon the text. They who tested Mr. Collins thus, were, as the result, assured that his preaching—like Paul's—was not with words of man's wisdom. As diamond is best polished with dust of diamond, so, in his esteem, scripture upon scripture was the best expositor. Like Mary, "he pondered things in his heart:" like the Apostles, he gave himself "continually unto prayer." Prepared by closet exercises, he entered the pulpit full of fresh thoughts, and baptized with heavenly power.

In the work of the Lord, though he had become in body unwieldy and weak, he allowed himself no stint. He no more counted the sermons he preached than a nightingale does the tunes it sings. "Never unemployed, never triflingly employed, never wiling away time," he did, with joyful industry, much more than ever got allotted to him on the Plan. I find record of sermons in the open air; sermons in cottages; sermons by the firelight of glass works; sermons amid the tubs of a laundry; sermons to the aged in workhouses; and sermons to the sick in hospital wards.

The favourite theme of his Bristol ministry was the glorious privilege of loving God with all the heart. Thus living himself, holding nothing back, a dedicated man, altogether the Lord's, to this great duty and blissful experience he turned again and again. In the pulpit, in the Leaders' Meeting, in the class, in the company he spake of it. Yet no repetition of the theme seemed "to stale his infinite variety." New aspects and new beauties appeared to open endlessly before him.

Mr. Collins's parlour-work was great and very fruitful. He was no manufacturer of laughs. He always had a message to bear; and—as did his Master at the Pharisee's table—could ever have said, "I have somewhat to say unto thee." Parties, as generally managed, were to him but social nuisances, in the midst of which his heart often ached to find that after all warnings against the world, to many in his flock the *summum bonum* still seemed to be to eat, drink, trifle, and be fine; and that his own feeling was so little understood that, with mistaken kindness, they invited him to see the folly done. In such a circle, if attempts to give it holier tone proved vain, he soon seemed reserved, reticent, ill at home; and, like enough, if imprisoned too closely for escape, before the time wore through, his candid opinion of the whole thing became uncomfortably manifest. But place him among a company, rich or poor, that evinced any wish to know and do the Father's will, then his stores of experience were at their command. The spirit of an Apostle breathed in him as he said, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you." His words had a sweetness,

his manner a winning tenderness, his look a happy fascinating glow, and his communications a spiritual richness, that made hungry souls listen with loving silence, like Mary at the Master's feet.

As a pastor, Bristol will not soon forget Mr. Collins. He warned the declining: he says:—"I spoke plain words to a Leader: the man has good gifts; his class once flourished; but he has become half-hearted, does the work of the Lord negligently, and, of course, it dwindles in his dilatory hand." He hunted after the stray: he says:—"I talked, with many tears, and I hope not without effect, to a youth that had wandered."

The Journal records:—"The Rev. Edward Nye preached at our chapel, on Elisha raising the son of the Shunammite. The whole narrative was turned to good account, but with special wisdom and ingenuity he exhorted us to 'bring ourselves into *warm contact* with those whom we wish to bless.'" This Mr. Collins did. He carried the Gospel to the poor. Among them he taxed his purse, as well as offered his prayers. One characteristic note of a visit reads thus:—"I thanked the Lord, and gave the poor man a shilling." Daily he fed the hungry, clothed the naked, warned the vicious, visited the sick, comforted the saints, and through all the neighbouring lanes, courts, and alleys, cared for those for whom no man else did care. Through all the purlieus of Bedminster poverty, his name, to this day, is "as ointment poured forth."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### CLOSE OF THE DAY.

WE shall, as much as possible, narrate the fluctuating experiences of broken health in Mr. Collins's own words.

"Wednesday, December 10th, 1862.—I finished a sermon upon 'the mind that was in Christ.' On Thursday morning, upon arising, my mind was obscured, my speech impeded, and my step uncertain. I became painfully conscious that, all unknown to me, during the night, the power to control my right hand and foot had been seriously diminished. It was clear that, to some extent, one side of me was paralysed. In my walk I felt a peculiar sense of tottering; and it was with the greatest difficulty that I could dress at all."

Sad evidence of the immediate result of this stroke is visible in a letter still remaining, which was commenced before, but concluded after, this gentle and painless, yet potent attack. The early portion, very cheerful in tone, is written neatly as usual; but in the close it is affecting to see the letters become sprawling, the thoughts are repeated, and the whole is wound up with the touching apology:—"Excuse this strange writing; I am sorry to send you such, but *I really cannot guide my hand.*"

As the medical adviser ordered mental rest and immediate change of scene, Mr. Collins set off on Saturday, December 13th, to Redditch, his early home, now the residence of his eldest sister.

December 15th.—I feel better. My rest last night was less broken. I am revived. Mr. Wright, my brother, has driven me out among old scenes, much altered, but yet suggestive to me of many pleasant

"December 18th.—I am sensibly weaker than before my seizure; my knee fails me still, but my hand is gradually recovering its cunning again. Many of my friends are in heaven. My journey nears its end. Whether I shall ever do full work again is doubtful. I am in the Lord's hands. He hath ever led me; He leads me now, and He will lead me aright.

"December 28th.—I do not yet fully discern the meaning of this affliction. It is so gentle that I feel no pain: it is so effectual that muscles and nerves are beyond my control. Let God's will be done. To be anything or to be nothing alike pleases me, if He make the allotment."

A letter bearing date December 30th, 1862, says:—"Our great bazaar opens to-day. The friends desire me to commence their doings with prayer. I shall do so. I am, however, so little in love with bazaars,—at best, necessary evils,—that at the first request a feeling came over me akin to what I felt when, 'lang syne,' a Scotch farmer begged of me to crave a blessing on a whiskey bottle.

"I am glad that you are reading Baxter: there is none better. Use your pen freely. Lose nothing. Every little helps. Work hard while your intellect is vigorous. My inventive power is now gone.

"Tell all your need,—tell out your whole soul,—to Him who hears prayer. He will teach you all things. Some—most useful—have had little teaching except of the Holy Ghost. Who cultivated John Bunyan? Persecutors locked him up, and in the leisure of that den God gave him thoughts that will never die, in words that men will never cease to read.

"What are you doing in the salvation line? Make all your sermons with the design of saving souls full in view. I rejoice to hear that you are following hard after God. While you do so, His right hand will uphold you, and His counsel guide. How many sermons have you upon perfect love? A clear, strong, feeling sermon on that subject is of great value alike to yourself and to the people. 'Heavenly places in Christ Jesus' must be your element."

"January 5th, 1863.—Left home at half-past four P.M. Quiet third class companions. One smoked. When his

pipe was out, I asked, 'Do you wish these boys around to learn that habit?' 'No, indeed. I wish I had never learned it myself. But, Sir, *the pipe is now my master.*'

"January 9th.—I went this morning to consult Mr. Ingoldby, of Finsbury Square. I found it pleasant to have a medical adviser who, in seeking information, asked about the pressure of the burden of souls upon my spirit; and who, after prescribing tonics, did not forget to encourage me to cast my care upon the Lord.

"January 10th.—I went to Reedham, to the Orphan Asylum, to see little Robert Campbell. The day was fine, the country beautiful, my spirits rose until *my emotions became ungovernable.* I chuckled until I was ashamed to meet people. This weakness of self-control for the present perfectly unfits me to conduct public worship.

"January 11th.—Damp and dull. It brought me back to moderation of tone. I thus found that dull days have their use: who shall say that dull people have not? I opened up to S. C. my plan of seeking retirement at Warwick. I told him, that though I could live without being chargeable upon any of our funds, yet it caused me sorrow to foresee that I should be obliged to curtail charities which had been my wont. He answered, 'Rightly considered, your charity will be not one grain diminished. You did give cash; you will give yourself. You will give all you do; and you will do all you can. Free, loving labour is more than money.' This reply at once relieved me.

"January 24th.—Arrived at Tranmere a little before seven P.M. During the night a terrible storm raged. The great blast so shook the window, in the room of my brother Henry's house, that its rattling forbade my sleep. Thinking to find some way of fixing it, I rose; while crossing the room, all strength went so instantaneously from my right knee that I shot down in a moment, without the slightest power to soften my fall. My weight broke a towel stand, and my head reached not an inch short of the sharp corner of an iron fender; which had I struck, I must have been dreadfully hurt. For that narrow escape I thanked 'the Preserver of men.'

"February 4th.—I cannot yet command my feelings; until I can, sense of propriety keeps me out of the pulpit. At Tranmere I visited Barney's grave, sailed round and explored that leviathan, 'the Great Eastern,' amused the children, led them out in one pleasant excursion or other, exhausted my scanty stock of recreations, and then fell home-sick. After short absence I always do. I long for my own pillow. So I pushed on, and am at Bedminster once more.

"February 8th.—I went to Torquay. Two navvies, my third-class companions, began to banter each other. Their droll heartiness of fun, kept up in perfect good humour, and without any ill words, perfectly convulsed me. I would have done anything to have stopped the laughter with which I was shaken. The thing was quite against my will. I really had no possibility of self-control. I was obliged to preface a few loving, serious words to them by an explanation of my weakness.

"February 10th.—The Rev. John Morgan took me a most enchanting walk: I remember nothing equal to it. I have also been over the house in which William of Orange passed the first night after his landing. I have been happy in this place; and in conversation have tried to bear a witness for God.

"February 16th.—I am now at Ilfracombe. In Christian company I have been much refreshed. In lonely walks the Lord has come nigh me. In some of the retired coves, and on the slopes of Hillsborough, I was sweetly conscious that the Dove of the Master's baptism nestled afresh in my bosom.

"I am weak. I cannot bear much. On Sunday, by mistake, I seated myself near the singers. I was obliged to remove. Their voices, though sweet, were too much for me.

"I fear that in many pretentious 'Ladies' Establishments' little of human learning, and nothing of Divine truth is taught. The middle classes had better soon look to it; for the public schools for children of artisans and cottagers are often, in both ways, better. In my lodging a young lady—'finished,' as it is called—read for me Rom. xi. I asked, 'Who wrote these words?'

She did not know. 'To whom?' She could not tell. Here was a well-grown Miss, --'educated!' Now, walking on the sands, I came up with a child picking drifted wood, with which to keep alive her poor mother's fire. 'My dear,' said I, 'who was gathering sticks when a prophet spoke to her?' 'The widow of Sarepta,' was the little maiden's prompt reply. Nor was that first answer an unfair specimen of her quick, bright readiness in the conversation that followed.

"There are memorials of six centenarians in the entrance of Ilfracombe churchyard.

"March 4th.—I am now at Brighton. I am very weak. I have no control over emotion. Joy in the Lord makes me often burst out into laughter which I cannot stop, and which, of course, strangers cannot understand.

"March 10th.—Portishead is my present resting-place. This day our Prince of Wales has been united in marriage with Alexandra of Denmark; and it has been a joy to me to observe the jubilant loyalty of the cottagers upon the occasion.

"April 6th.—Clevedon. I have worshipped with 'the Friends,' 'the Brethren,' and the Independents. I have seen nothing better than Methodism, nor, in my judgment, so good. I have just had an interesting conversation with Mr. Goldschmid, a converted Jew. I was greatly moved by his reading of the eightieth Psalm. His talk also of Joseph as a type of Jesus much affected me. The two men in prison with Joseph foreshadowed to him the two thieves crucified with Jesus.

"April 23rd.—Lewes. I went up to the castle this morning; the view is most romantic. What with the fair scene and the exhilarating air I literally quivered with emotion. I found out Mrs. Dawes, one of my old Sandhurst mothers. She is now seventy-eight. Her house used to be one of my palaces: always beautifully clean. In the afternoon I got up a little gathering in her room. Besides myself and our venerable hostess we had an invalid City Missionary, a young lady, very fragile, fast sinking to the tomb, and a poor worn out old Class Leader. We were a set of broken, feeble folk; yet heavenly talk made us very happy. The aged



veteran, being asked to give out a hymn, made me smile by his selection. '*Soldiers of Christ arise!*'—said he. It irresistibly struck me that we were fitter for hospital than for field; and that, as swordsmen, our shattered party would be counted but a sorry lot."

In May Mr. Collins sought and, of course, received the recommendation of his District Meeting to the Conference that he be permitted to retire from active service, and rest as a Supernumerary.

"May 22nd.—An unoccupied house, abutting upon the Warwick Lammas ground, seeming suitable for our purpose, I have this day taken it. We shall have plenty of space, fresh air, open prospects, a chapel near, and lonely, lovely, walks beginning at its very door.

"June 5th.—I am struck with the numerous deaths of men younger than myself. John Mollard's name occurs in the obituary of this week. At Durham, I was his pastor: I examined him, and received him as a Local Preacher upon the Plan; now, he is *home* before me.

"June 18th.—Malvern Hills were visible in my walks as a child: their forms were familiar as an old friend; yet never, until to-day, have I essayed to ascend them. The feat was accomplished upon the back of a venerable mule. In going up the old creature was so gentle, and safe, and pleasant, that I felt much inclined to sink the dignity of horse exercise, make a bid for the helpful animal, and take him off with me for Warwick riding; but coming down shook me, tried me, revealed the littleness of my strength, and deferred all thought of purchase."

Mr. Collins's beloved daughter Emily was now fast drawing nigh to the gates of death. He wrote, "The prospect of speedily going home, of going to be 'for ever with the Lord,' is not one to make you either alarmed or sad. By tender affection we have lived much in each other's heart, but our hope and life are supremely in Jesus. How full His Word is of assurances of love? You have in part proved them. You go to know their fulness of meaning. All you have had is but the earnest of that blissful union with the Lord in immeasurable and eternal love that yet awaits you."

"July 2nd.—At eleven this morning a telegram sum-

moned me—as I would see dear Emmy alive—to set forth at once to Loughborough. I started immediately, and arrived at three. She was relieved by seeing me. It was a comfort to press my hand and have me by her side in her last earthly hour. Breathing was, for her, a hard struggle, painfully laborious. Her toil beneath accumulations upon her lungs was oppressive; and when she attempted to speak, her utterance was so impeded, and her cough so sorely troubled her, that it was impossible to make out all she said. But her eyes spoke. Resignation shone in every feature. My weakness of nerve was now first felt in its bitterness of trial. I could not command myself. As she looked upon me, I felt almost choked with grief. It was only possible to keep composure by keeping silent. Whenever I attempted to speak, irresistible bursts of passionate weeping mastered me. How well, in my weakness and hers, that we had thoroughly known each other before! still better, that we knew Christ! I was, however, strengthened to kneel and pray as she departed, and then, when her happy soul was fled, I was enabled to give thanks. Many wept her loss, but only few could know her worth. Her intelligence, gentleness, and tenderness of conscience were exemplary.

“July 6th.—Emmy was buried in the Loughborough cemetery. My heart bows without rebellion to the will of the Lord, but my nerves succumb. In the stress of these days of sorrow uncontrollable paroxysms shook my frame; slight renewal of paralysis came on, so drawing my face towards the left side that I could scarcely open or shut the right eye.

“August 5th.—I fear that I am gradually losing strength. Here, at Warwick, I pay many visits to the sick and poor. Three of my cottage neighbours suffer from paralysis; with them my weakness helps my sympathy.

“August 29th.—I have returned to Malvern. I did so in order to try Dr. Caplin's electro-chemical bath. My own physician would neither advise nor forbid it. As it was much upon my mind to make the experiment, about a week ago I took one, and certainly have felt much improved. It is just an ordinary warm bath with the

simple addition that the vessel you sit in is made of copper, and that while sitting in it you hold a conductor, by means of which a stream of electricity passes perpetually through you. This in my case was done for an hour, and then I went to bed. As soon as I lay down, there commenced in my brain, and continued for half-an-hour, a gentle throb, a tingle, and a strange sensation as of trickling. I wondered how it would end, committed myself to the Lord, and fell asleep. In the morning I awoke two hours earlier than common, but with more conscious refreshment than I had known for twelve months. My tremor, my uncertainty of step, and all my unfavourable symptoms were sensibly abated."

October 19th.—A letter of this date advises and encourages a young labourer in a wide Circuit thus:—"Those numerous villages afford good room for evangelism. Be not one of those who can do nothing out of their study. Accustom yourself to read, to think consecutively, and to make sermon jottings, on country roads, in poor chambers, and even in farm kitchens. I used to do so. The growing plan of preachers coming home every night has sadly relaxed the hold of Methodism upon rural England. Formerly, the preacher's visit, and the preacher's talk, linked families to him. Now they scarcely see him except in the pulpit; and then under the chilling influence of a thin week-night congregation. The old plan was really less wearing to us as well as more profitable to the people. It involved less night exposure, and, with moderate tact and self-discipline, was not so much hindrance to study as those who never tried might fear."

The new year, 1864, Mr. Collins's last, opened upon him with a heavy trial. Almost its first fact was bereavement by the death of his beloved wife. Her true worth was little known. Sufferings—result of asthma and diseased heart—had for some years precluded the possibility of her cultivating, as she desired to do, intimacy with the friends among whom her husband laboured. But all who were favoured to have intercourse with her were invariably impressed with her sincerity and thoroughness of character. Religion was her life. She

was very prayerful, and more manifestly unworldly than almost any one I ever met.

The Rev. S. Allen, once her Class Leader, says:—  
“Her piety was both ardent and enlightened. The beautifully clear statements in which she revealed the ever-deepening, ever-expanding, work of grace in her soul, rendered it a privilege of no common kind to be associated with her in the communion of saints.”

With this testimony my own knowledge of her agrees. Her love for good people and all good works was admirable. I have often been much pleased to see in this sensitive, cultured lady her evident joy in those religious services where, in the Methodist manner, solid Christians, though but rude in speech, are permitted to give evidence for God. Her delight was specially in the faith and patience, worship and witness-bearing, of the Lord's poor.

Her husband says:—“For more than a quarter of a century her truthful love has been to me a steady stream of consolation and refreshment. She was never forward to intrude counsels upon me in temporal things; and still less did she seek to intermeddle with management in the Church of God; but her prayers have, all through, upheld my hands and brought a blessing on my work.

“Since dear Emmy died, her thoughts have turned unceasingly towards eternity. She has seemed specially pressing to follow her child. The last six months have been months of retirement and rest. Repose was upon her spirit. Sabbath and assurance dwelt with her. She often spoke cheerfully and hopefully on her approaching dismissal.

“In her last hours, when pain lay heavy upon her, though I had, at the moment, some doubt about the fitness of such an inquiry of such an one, yet, for the sake of others, I brought myself to ask, ‘Is your eye wholly on Christ now?’ She had little breath to spare. Her answer was necessarily brief. With a look as if of wonder that I could question it she replied, ‘Of course.’ Then I remembered the Word of the Lord to His disciple. ‘Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip?’

“From the time the doctors gave up her case, her soul vehemently desired heaven. Her heart and flesh

cried out for God. So earnest became her longings, and so great her pains, that at length it seemed right to unite our petition with hers, that the Lord would now admit her to His glorious presence; which He graciously did about forty minutes past twelve P.M. of Wednesday, January 6th, 1864.

“April 12th.—My fifty-fourth birthday. Home seems lonely without my accustomed mate. I find, however, sweet solace in thought of heaven, and efforts to do good. How full of mercy has been my life! How graciously the Lord has dealt with me! I determine, henceforth, through my brief remaining day, to get and to keep nearer to Him.”

In May, Mr. Collins was hastily summoned to Kent to the deathbed of Mrs. Austen, one—as will be remembered—of his oldest and truest friends. Concerning this last visit to that much-loved region, Mr. Carlos Coleman writes:—“He stayed with me. The spirit of his friend had fled ere he could reach. His thrills of emotion in sight of her remains were very touching. Though feeble, he took part in the conduct of the funeral. His address to a numerous company, over the coffin in the chapel, will never be forgotten. It was so simple, heartfelt, and exceedingly beautiful, that, from that moment, Christian friendship seemed to us to be a thing sacred, deep, strong, and tender, beyond anything we had ever conceived before. His visible weakness, and that gushing of soul which only just allowed him to speak, and no more, no doubt increased the melting effect of the service. While, in the interval between that day and the Sabbath, preparing a funeral sermon and memorial sketch, I could not but be struck with the diminution of his strength. His mind was clear as ever; but bodily debility rendered him incapable of long consecutive effort. It was sweet, however, to observe how prayer, his ancient habit, was now his best refreshment. Oft, when wearied with writing, he would say, ‘Come, let us pray a little.’ From such exercises he ever seemed to rise invigorated.

“When Sunday evening came, the gathering was a crowd. It was good to be there. Yet, those of us who had known the preacher in his day of might, were sad.

Though aided in preliminaries, it was as much as he could do to get through. As he showed the blessedness of such as 'die in the Lord,' we joyed with the joy of hope: still it was a day of sorrow. We all mourned the holy woman, the mother in Israel, who was gone; but many, his children in the Gospel, wept even more to see the strength of the man who had been among us such a Samson, so utterly broken. We saw that we should soon be also bereaved of him. We perceived that we should see his face no more.

"At my home he was cheerful and full of good talk. Standing on his old battle-ground, reminiscence revived his ardour. Flashes of hope sparkled in him, that he might even yet, by rest and quiet, be strengthened again to do valiantly for the Lord.

"His form is indelibly printed upon my memory. I see him still. Now in the house, bright, intelligent, and joyous: now in the garden, upright, slow, leaning heavily upon his staff, his strong, noble features half hidden by the shadow of a loose black hat; sometimes absorbed in thought; next uttering terse sentences; then, after narration of some bygone mercy, pausing, and, with beaming countenance and eyes filled with tears, looking me full in the face, he would say, with infectious joy, 'Bless God, Carlos! bless God, I say!'"

Upon his return, Mr. Collins wrote in his diary, "I have been more excited in Sussex than my feebleness can well bear. Many spots there are sacred to me. Even yet I seem always to realize more gracious Divine manifestations in those parts than I do anywhere else."

With waning strength Mr. Collins seemed to have waxing love. Each day had its deeds of mercy; visits to cottages, dealings with the sick, efforts for the good of haymakers, militiamen, and the like. He relieved distress, scattered tracts, spoke good words, and distributed portions of Scripture all round.

For meeting the case of untaught, unprepared minds, nothing equals personal, illustrative instruction. Public preaching often fails with such. "If you would fill narrow bottles," as Baxter says, "you must take them separately; you must *pour* the wine *into* them one by one: not *throw* it *over* them in a crowd." Thus pri-

vately and patiently did Mr. Collins expound from house to house among the poor of Warwick. *To a gardener* he gave the thought that God can see acts in tempers, by reminding the man how he himself could foresee the garden, with all its plants and flowers, by only looking at the seed. *To a passer by*, whom he called to take a coin that lay upon the road, from his own lack of power—through stiffness of the limbs—to pick up the cash that was in his path, he taught the value of humility. “Stoop, stoop;” said he, “we fail of many a gift God puts before us, because we will not, do not, cannot stoop.” *To a soldier*, much sought by Romish proselytizers, he set forth the Pope as he is pictured in 2 Thess. ii. 4, exalting himself above all that is called God; and made the fact that he does so plain to his military hearer’s mind, by showing to him that in forbidding the sacramental cup, though Jesus said, “Drink ye *all* of it; and in teaching adoration of images, though Jehovah commands, “Ye shall not bow down to them,” the Pope acts as a subaltern would do if he presumed to reverse the orders of the commander-in-chief.

How valuable is goodness! What a treasure this broken-down Methodist Supernumerary Preacher must have been to his lowly neighbours! The poor blessed him. The widow and the desolate found in him a comforter. The outcast learned from him to love the Saviour.

On September 3rd, 1864, Mr. Collins paid his last pastoral visit. After that, neighbours saw him no more. He never went out again. His work was done.

The final entry in his Journal bears date, Tuesday, September 13th. It reads thus:—“My breathing has been worse since I wrote last. I feel deeply impressed that I cannot live long. I am much as my dear wife was when her end drew nigh. My heart palpitates exceedingly. At class, on Sunday, in my own house, I was very happy with our brethren. But I fear I must request them not to come again. Reading and prayer are my favourite occupations. Some one joins me,—Aunt Maria, or my daughter, or one of the servants.”

September 14th was the last day in which he came

down stairs. Adverting to the comparatively early close of his course, he seemed to be of Baxter's mind, who asks:—"What is a candle for but to be burnt? Nor will we complain of its consumption, if only it have all gone in lighting men." Yet conscious that his own early labours had been excessive, and his continuance in them too restless, he, in his own quaint way, added:—"If I had taken things more quietly, and sometimes rested my back against a tree when I was weary, I might, perhaps, have kept longer in the field."

Speaking of his pulpit preparations, he said:—"Some passages of Scripture—especially the promises of perfect love—I have prayed over for hours; I have meditated upon them for days; I have kept them before me for months; I have reverted to them with ever-deepening thoughts, again and again, from year to year. Thus I have been enabled to feel them, to sound the depth of them, to see them in many different points of view, and with clearness to speak of them."

When one sympathized with his suffering agony, he said:—"It becomes me—a rescued sinner—to be thankful. What is this to the torment of eternal fire? Who can sufficiently warn sinners? I have been earnest with them. Many a time I have trembled from head to foot at thought of their peril; but my feeling, and all feeling,—except that in the heart of Jesus,—is utterly inadequate to the dolefulness of their case."

Upon my visiting Mr. Collins in his affliction, he said:—"You must preach my funeral sermon. The people will have one, and, of all others, you know me best: but mark, your text must be the case of the penitent thief." "But, Sir, such a selection will be thought strangely inappropriate." "Why so? That Scripture I am sure suits me: *for it sets forth man's lowest and God's highest*. As to acceptance, I stand on the same ground as publican and thief: as to experience, there is, I grant you, a difference. Through grace, through grace, my heart, all love to Him, is as I like my Father to see it."

Mr. Collins's last illness was divided into three parts of very different character, viz.:—

I. A month during which he suffered exceedingly from



palpitation, rapidity of pulse, and difficulty of breathing. To his consciousness, death, at that time, seemed every moment at hand.

2. Two succeeding months during which those distressing symptoms were abated. At this time, not aware of the slow, sure, steady, ebbing out of vital power, he thought recovery a probability.

3. The last fortnight, in which, so soon as relapse took place, it was evident alike to himself and to his friends that the end was nigh. It was very sweet to mark the ready exchange of the cherished hope of life into a child-like acceptance of the Father's will.

The last stage was one of great enfeeblement and drowsiness; silent, patient waiting for release was almost all that was physically possible. We turn, therefore, to the bright beaming words earlier spoken, and recorded by loving listeners, to show to us how this pure, precious Christian met his final foe.

As he needed constant attention, several waited upon him in turn. Every change in the rotation of nurses was invariably initiated by the reading of the Word and prayer. Even when at his feeblest, though somewhat abbreviated, this was never omitted: at times of special weakness, a suitable collect selected from the Book of Common Prayer admirably served the purpose, and the use of it was greatly enjoyed.

Not only was much prayer offered in his chamber, but, also, much Scripture was read. Nearly the whole Bible was gone through. The Psalms were gone over several times. His interjection of rising thoughts was very delightful. The old Hebrew histories were now, as ever, to his mind replete with evangelical ideas. The Book of Deuteronomy—long a favourite with him—seemed specially pleasant. The New Testament was a perpetual feast. Apocalyptic visions sometimes set him a-glow. His views of prophetic interpretation led him to look for and to exult in the idea of the speedy fall of the Papacy, the restoration of Israel, and the universal triumph of Christ.

I will now subjoin some jottings of words spoken in this vestibule of heaven:—

“September 14th.—Through the night he was full of

praise and humble joy. After quoting, "Ye are of more value than many sparrows, and not one of them is forgotten before God," he added, "'Not one of them;' strange, but true. I dare not contradict Him. '*Not one of them!*'" He next dwelt sweetly upon the Saviour's assurance,—“The Father himself loveth you;” and then upon that comforting word, so oft repeated in the one hundred and thirty-sixth Psalm: “His mercy endureth for ever.”

September 15th.—He remarked: “I have habitually—as truth required that I should—always condemned myself and justified God. I have always been careful that my soul's confidence should be rightly placed.

Now I have found the ground wherein  
 Sure my soul's anchor may remain,  
 The wounds of Jesus, for my sin  
 Before the world's foundation slain;  
 Whose mercy shall unshaken stay  
 When heaven and earth are fled away.”

September 16th.—His pain was great. He said: “I have now to bear patiently, as aforetime I have had to do earnestly, my Father's will.” Tried by a very severe paroxysm, in which he endured pangs, as all thought, “of mortal sufferance,” expressions, such as the following, were spoken, of course, uttered in disjointed exclamations: “Come, my Love, my Joy.” “Receive me, my Saviour.” “I shall see the King. I am going to the city whose gates are praise.” “Give my love to all my friends; tell them that I die in faith; that I have no fear; and that death has no sting.” He afterwards prayed, “Lord, bless my child;” and then addressing his daughter charged her to be “true to her father's God, her mother's God;” and solemnly laid it upon her faithfully to follow their steps, that so, at the last, she, with the members of his family aforegone, all of whom he named, might together be a cluster of ripe fruit in the paradise of God. With great exultation he thus gave praise:—“Blessed be God that ever I was born! Blessed be God who hath washed me in the precious blood! Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!”

“O Lord, I have delighted in Thy precepts! That law

of Thine, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart,' Thou hast made dear unto me. According to Thy new covenant Thou hast put it into my mind. Thou hast created within me an implacable hatred to sin, of all sin. Of Thy law of purity I have not been ashamed. By Thy grace, of Thy power to save to the uttermost, I have not been a timid witness.

"Satan! *I have done with him.* I have resisted him, and he flees from me. 'Jesus, my All in All Thou art.' I am in Thy hands, loving Saviour. In these final struggles perfect me in patience. Let me lack nothing. *As Thou wilt; what Thou wilt; when Thou wilt.* I leave it all to Thee. O my Love, I leave it all to Thee, I do, Lord."

"September 18th.—Facing God, and crossing the threshold of eternal life, I am very glad that I have witnessed against the prevailing, ever growing worldly conformity in the Church of these times. *I have always stood up for plain, honest, Bible Methodism.* And, in the light of this death chamber, it seems to me that all Wesleyan Ministers must do so who would stand without blame before the Throne at the last. My work of protest now is ended. In my present circumstances affairs around me are nothing. I look straight up. I see Jesus: Jesus only!

September 20th.—He spoke delightfully of the fact that Jesus not only washed His disciples' feet, but did it on the verge of the passion,—did it at a time when the crushing weight of His great work was coming heaviest upon Him. "He who so stooped to them, so thought of them, and, above all, loved them; He who changeth not, who is *the same* yesterday, to-day, and for ever; He will not, surely He will not, forget His poor disciple, me. No. As no pressure of the cross made Him forget them then, no glory of the throne will make Him forget me now."

"How perfect is the Saviour's work; One beautiful figure setting it forth belongs alike to Hebrew and to Christian Scripture. A poor wrinkled old Jewish widow, sitting in sackcloth, dust, and fetters, is represented as set free, transfigured into beauty, and clothed in the glorious apparel of a royal bride. Thus the Lord doth with us. Ah! that bath of blood leaves not a spot!

that robe of holiness leaves not a rag! that fulness of love leaves not a wrinkle! O that the Church, strong in inward life, would keep the 'love of her espousals, and ever walk in her bridal attire!"

"September 22nd.—In suffering, patient faith is the great thing, Jesus 'learned obedience,' *i.e.*, new exercises of it, 'by the things which He suffered.' So do I.

"September 25th.—My child, we will not dwell upon the temporary separation, but look on to the eternal reunion. We will not speak of going down into the grave, but of going up to heaven. I am not going to die, *but to live*, to live with Him. While following after, walk closely with God, my child. By His grace, be a Christian. Stick to the Bible. Let it be your counsellor, and the staff in your right hand. I now find that precious Word to be the marrow of life."

In conversation with me, Mr. Collins remarked, "I have not strength to keep up those varied intercessions which I have been wont, in daily order, to make for all things relating to the Church, and for all sorts and conditions of men. Intercourse with God—rather fellowship than petition—is all that my feebleness now can bear. To suit present weakness, I have, therefore, of late, in devotional exercises, acted according to a new scheme, which I call *My short almanack*. It lasts three days. On Monday I set my soul to meditate upon the Father's majesty, and love, and unspeakable gift. I address Him, adore Him, embrace Him. On Tuesday, the glories of the eternal Son, the merit and mercy of the Redeemer, the compassion of the great High Priest, and the royalties of the enthroned Mediator, become my theme. I draw nigh to Him, claim Him, trust Him. On Wednesday, the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, the Witness for Christ, the Spring of all benediction and sanctity, is the Object of my thought and faith. I open my heart to Him, yield to Him, commune with Him. On Thursday, I just begin at the beginning, and, following the same order, run through it over again. As for the Sundays, well, they are all '*Trinity Sundays*' with me now. As their light dawns I say,—

Hail! Father, Son, and Spirit, great  
Before the birth of time,

Enthroned in everlasting state,  
 JEHOVAH, ELOHIM!  
 Thy powerful, wise, and loving mind  
 Did our creation plan;  
 And all the glorious Persons form'd  
 To make Thy favourite, Man.  
 Again Thou didst, in council met,  
 Thy ruin'd work restore;  
 Establish'd in our first estate,  
 To forfeit it no more.  
 And when we rise in love renew'd,  
 Our souls resemble Thee,  
 An image of the Triune God,  
 To all eternity."

I had studied Dr. Owen's quarto on Communion with God: a noble book, and, as Daniel Burgess says, "not the less to be accounted so because it hath been honourably enamelled by a scoffer's reproaches." Mr. Wesley thought well enough of it to put it, with but slight abridgment, into his "Christian Library." That treatise teaches,—what the earliest and purest ages also held,—that in love, grace, and consolation, believers may have communion with each sacred Person distinctly. I was also familiar with notices of experience answering to the dogma of that volume scattered through the Memoirs of Hester Ann Rogers, Lady Maxwell, Bramwell, John Smith and others. Above all, I knew the profound letter of Charles Perronet, printed with important notes in the Methodist Magazine for 1849, page 801. Yet, knowing that my venerated kinsman had long, like the Marquis De Renty, professed to "carry about with him an experimental verity of the Holy Trinity," I ventured to ask some questions concerning his consciousness of this deep thing of God. His answer was marked by his usual soundness of judgment, practical sense, and reverence for the written Word. He said, "I am in possession of no secret. I have never either looked for, or had, anything mystical, anything beyond what plain Scriptures warrant. I do not suppose that I have any Divine manifestations peculiar to myself. The ordering of my thoughts in the manner I have told you of is not 'of commandment,'—is not the result of any extraordinary leading: it began as a mental choice; being found convenient and profitable, it has grown into a habit.

In acts of devotion my mind sees its way most clearly when it talks with one Person. I, therefore, seeking edification, speak unto each of the ever-glorious Three distinctly in behalf of such things, and such things only, as Holy Scripture sets forth to be the province of each distinctly."

The late celebrated Robert Hall, I find, advised this distinctness of thought in worship, and, after specially speaking of the benefit derived from praying "immediately to Christ," says:—"We are much wanting to ourselves in not having more dealings with the Saviour; in not addressing Him now in the same spirit, and with the same personal directness, with which He used to be applied to when upon earth, for the relief of bodily disease."

The notes of October 8th furnish an excellent example of Mr. Collins's method.

"*Glory be to Thee, O Father!* Stand by me, and help. Condemn me not in this hour of weakness and departure. Thou wilt do all things well. Thou ever hast. Thou always dost. Blessed be Thy Name! Have I not for years given up all to Thee, and striven to live in Thy covenant? Do I not now love Thee, O my Joy, with all the force left in my poor exhausted nature? I am Thine. I love Thee. Thou wilt take care of Thine own. Thou wilt let me glorify Thee in the death I die.

"*Glory be to Thee, O Christ!* My strong Helper, I confide in Thee. I trust in Thee. As Thy people passed through the Red Sea, so, led by Thee, shall I safely pass this billowy sea. Glory be to Thee! whose face I shall soon behold in righteousness.

"*Glory be to Thee, O Holy Ghost!* Jesus said, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost.' I receive Thee. I do. I know I do. Thou art not like the dumb, dead, helpless, and unhelpful, idols of the heathen. Thou respondest to my faith. Thou art here. Thou art mine. Thou art my Comforter.

"*Blessed Triune God,* I have no matters to hold back from Thee. Thou knowest how I have sought Thee. Thou knowest that I came hither that I might help Thy cause where it seemed to be poor, and feeble, and low. Thou knowest that my wish for the return of

strength has been but that I might serve Thee in the cottages of the poor. Behold, it pleaseth Thee to call me away. O Thou, who wast the Helper of my dear wife, amid her 'heavy pains of death,' wilt Thou not—I know Thou wilt—be my strong Helper too?"

A few days after, he exclaimed, "By how many mercies am I surrounded! From how many pains delivered! O Lord, since I dedicated myself to Thee and to Thy ministry, Thou knowest that I have not wickedly departed from Thee. Pardon my shortcomings. I wash me in the blood of Jesus. O my Shepherd, my smitten Shepherd! by Thy stripes I am healed. I know it. *All the attestations of my short life terminate there.*"

In the concluding days of his illness he was not able to speak much; and the little he did speak he could not always articulate distinctly enough to be understood.

On Christmas morning he repeated the lines:—

Will He forsake His throne above,  
Himself to worms impart?  
Answer, Thou Man of Grief and Love!  
And speak it to my heart.

He slept much, and said little more that day.

The next day, severe spasms in the region of the heart again beset him; during the paroxysms of which, he prayed much in feebly uttered words and frequent ejaculations. "Father! Father! help! Blessed Redeemer, help! Thou, my Friend, my Life, my All! help!" Through the whole keen suffering of the final conflict he was patient, gentle, and uncomplaining. In every lull of pain, or interval of relief, he invariably became full of praise, and often exclaimed, "Glory to God! Glory to God!" He peacefully breathed his last in his daughter's arms, December 27th, 1864.

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